BRECON METHODISM

T. WYNNE JONES

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Wesleyan Methodism

IN THE

BRECON CIRCUIT;

And Introduction of

English & Welsh Methodism

Into the Principality.

A Historical and Biographical Sketch from 1750 to 1888.

BY THE

Rev. T. Wynne-Jones.

With Introduction by Rev. RICHARD ROBERTS, Ex-President of the Conference.

NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS.

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1888.

TO

HERBERT C. I. RICH, J.P.,

SENIOR STEWARD OF THE BRECON CIRCUIT,

IN REMEMBRANCE OF A LIFE-LONG LOYALTY TO WESLEYAN METHODISM,

OF VALUABLE SERVICES RENDERED TO THE CIRCUIT FOR UPWARDS OF FORTY YEARS,

AND OF A FRIENDSHIP WHICH HAS INFLUENCED BENEFICENTLY

THREE YEARS OF HAPPY MINISTERIAL LABOUR AMONG EARNEST AND SINCERE METHODISTS,

THIS LITTLE VOLUME

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE Town and County of Brecknock occupy no mean position in the history of the rise and progress of the great Revival of the eighteenth century. The country embraced within the boundaries of the Brecon Circuit claims the distinguished honour of having given to Methodism its first Itinerant Preacher, first Martyr, first College, and its first and greatest Welsh Hymnist.

It also gave to Wesleyan Methodism its Pioneer and most illustrious Missionary; and further, it contends for the honour of having given it its English and Welsh periodical literature. Such pretensions, if true, assign to the Circuit a position inferior to none, for historic associations and far-reaching consequences. That these pretensions are no vain boasting is an indisputable fact, and the purpose of this historical and biographical sketch is to collect, arrange, and preserve these interesting records.

The names of Howel Harris, the Apostle of Wales; of William Seward, Methodism's proto-martyr; of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon; and of Williams, Pantycelyn, will ever be cherished with devout gratitude by the Evangelical Church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Wesleyan Methodism venerates the name of Thomas Coke, of Brecon, the founder and administrator of its Foreign Missions; and if Walter Churchey influenced Wesley to start the Arminian Magazine, the eccentric versifier merits a place of honour in the records of our Church.

The rise of Methodism and the neighbourhood of Brecon are so inseparably associated, that it would be impossible in a historical sketch of Wesleyan Methodism in the locality to pass unnoticed the central figures and the principal events of the Revival, consequently the Circuit handbook will be prefaced by a brief statement of its leading facts.

Many fields have been gleaned in the preparation of this sketch, and the admirable volumes of Tyerman, Stevens, Etheridge, Williams, and Poole, often consulted.

The work we have attempted will, we trust, prove in some respect a worthy monument to the memory of Brecon Methodist Worthies, and a faithful record of "what work God did in their days, in the times of old."

All that remains to be done is to commit this sketch to the "God of our fathers," and to express our obligation to all who have kindly aided us in our work, especially to Messrs. George Butcher, of Glasbury, who first suggested the idea of the sketch and collected many items of interest, and D. J. Thomas, Brecon, who rendered invaluable assistance in various ways; also to the Rev. James Hanby, Messrs. Hobday, Brecon, and James, Devynnock, and to the Rev. T. Woolmer, of London, and Miss Rosa M. Evans, of Hay, for the illustrations.

Brecon, August 25th, 1888.

ERRATA.

The Author regrets that a few errors were overlooked in correcting the proofs, which work had to be done during the busy time of changing Circuits. The principal mistakes are the following:—

Page 32. Read, "Some of them occupy prominent positions among preachers of peerless pre-eminence in the history of the Welsh pulpit."

Page 39. Read, "denounced by several clergymen."

Page 40. Read, "assemblies" *vice* "assembles."

Page 53. Read, "Thomas Trouncer," not "Trouneer."

Page 54. Read, "A mother *in* Israel."

Page 64. Lock Chapel cost £300, not £30.

Page 71. Read, "Chairmen," not "Chairman."

Page 73. Read "J. Hanby," not "Hansby."

Page 61. In the account of David Rogers, read, "five years in English Circuits, died at Darlington in 1824."

Page 98. Read, "faithful portraiture," not "faitful."

INTRODUCTION.

IT is well to rescue from oblivion some of the less prominent facts and events connected with the triumphs of Christianity, and to give them a permanent place in the pages of history. We may learn many profitable lessons from the less important incidents in the religious life of a country or its people. We may behold the working of great and noble principles in toil pursued amid manifold discouragement and in great obscurity. From that obscurity, like a river whose source is unknown, there often flows a perennial stream to bless and enrich a whole continent. The County of Brecon is small in its area and sparse in its population. It contains no town whose population exceeds eight thousand, and only two with more than five thousand. From this rural Welsh County, there have issued forth streams of blessing refreshing even now peoples in the four quarters of the globe. Dr. Coke, born at Brecon, the prince of missionaries, kindled in his day a missionary fire which has not yet died out, and around which nations now thankfully gather to feel its sacred glow. James Stewart Thomas, from Hay, sounded forth for years the Gospel of God's free grace in Southern Africa, and died a martyr under the assegai of the assassin while at the post of duty endeavouring to stay the ravages of a tribal war. Daniel J. Draper published the good tidings of Salvation in Australasia, and while on his voyage a second time to the country of his adoption, went down with the "London" in the stormy Bay of Biscay. The sacred melodies of Williams, Pantycelyn, are now sung by worshipping multitudes in America and Australia; their familiar strains soothe the solitudes of Welshmen in Africa and India; the air of foreign ports often vibrate with the voice of Welsh sailors singing the favourite songs of their native Zion. Howel Harris, whose unpremeditated but mighty addresses on sin, retribution, death, judgment, and eternity, "fell like balls of fire" on the careless and impenitent multitudes, roused the whole county from its apathy, and sent forth a mighty wave of religious influence which has not yet subsided. All these men were Breconians, to whom the world is indebted for much of the good that is in it. We are under obligation to the Author for unearthing so many events of interest in connection with Breconshire, grouping them together with such taste and beauty, and holding them up in the light of the living.

RICHARD ROBERTS.

128, Alexandria Road,
St. John's Wood, London, N.W.,
August, 1888.

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DR. COKE AND MEMORIAL SCHOOLS.

Wesleyan Methodism in the Brecon Circuit.

CHAPTER I.

THE FOUNDERS OF ENGLISH METHODISM.

"Painted on the eternal wall
The Past shall re-appear."—WHITTIER.

SUPERSTITIOUS and idolatrous pilgrimages are discountenanced by the Protestant Church, but enlightened regard—even reverence—for the birthplaces of great men and great movements is encouraged. Lives of truly great men exert a beneficent influence, and the history of mighty movements inspires the Christian Church.

The country embraced within the boundaries of our Circuit is, as we have already seen, "surpassing rich" in historic associations of the great Revival. A sketch of "The Founders of Methodism" will include the central figures of the movement—three illustrious Englishmen and three illustrious Welshmen.

Preparatory, however, to these biographical and historical narratives, we should endeavour to understand the moral and religious condition of England prior to the appearance of these eminent men.

Professor Lecky, whose history of the eighteenth century is acknowledged to be unequalled, expresses his deliberate judgment on the far-reaching results of Methodism, thus: "Although the career of the elder Pitt, and the splendid victories by land and sea that were won during his ministry, form unquestionably the most dazzling episodes in the reign of George II., they must yield, I think, in real importance to that religious revolution which shortly before had begun in England by the preaching of the Wesleys and Whitfield." Professor Green, in his valuable work on the "History of the English People," corroborates Mr. Lecky's verdict: "The Methodists themselves were the least result of the Methodist revival. Its action upon the Church broke the lethargy of the clergy. . . But the noblest result of the religious revival was the steady attempt, which has never ceased from that day to this, to remedy the guilt, the ignorance, the physical suffering, the social degradation of the profligate and the poor."—(Telford's Life of Wesley).

The story of the rise and progress of this remarkable evangelical revival will never cease to fascinate and interest all readers. Erroneous views of the great Founders of Methodism,

and, indeed, of the Revival itself, which once predominated, are gradually losing ground, and, now, men who love the Lord Jesus Christ and His Church, devoutly recognise the hand of God in the great awakening, and rejoice that it did what it did, not only in the midst of a great nation, but of a great Church. The work of the Founders of Methodism meant the conversion of England. It meant a complete change in the religious life of the existing churches, and the reflex influence of Methodism has been beyond description.

True, Methodism contravened ecclesiastical precedents and traditions, but is it not equally true that great religious awakenings ever do this? And, further, is it not true that the age of passive servility to the presumptions of sacerdotalism and the decrees of councils approaches its close? Methodism, like the Protestant Reformation, liberated the Church of God from fetters, and assigned to the New Testament supreme pre-eminence and paramount authority therein. For accomplishing these things Methodism needs no apology.

Although our church needs no apology, the story of its origin and development cannot be too often told; and a biographical and historical sketch of Brecon Methodists and Methodism will place us among the historic characters and principal events of the great revival.

The Origin of Methodism.

Methodism was a spontaneous adoption of new practical measures, which the ever-varying condition of society rendered expedient, and indeed necessary, for the effectiveness of the Church of Christ in the moral and spiritual regeneration of humanity.

The re-action from Puritanism under the Restoration plunged England into a state of appalling degeneracy. Iniquity flourished. Godliness languished. The Court countenanced gross licentiousness. England's temple was the theatre. The drama was demoralising. God's messengers were ridiculed. The Established Church lapsed into formality and indifference, and the disastrous moral contagion seriously affected the Nonconformist churches. In a word, Canon Taylor's painful testimony is corroborated by every historian, "England had lapsed into virtual heathenism when Wesley appeared."

Eminent men in the Church of God viewed with the utmost concern this deplorable declension of morality and religion. The prospects were dark and unpropitious. England stood on a fearful precipice. The enemies of the Cross greatly rejoiced. The triumph of infidelity appeared assured. Voltaire, the brilliant and versatile Frenchman, after a three year's sojourn in our country, addressed, on his return to France, a number of

his disciples on the subject of "Religion." Referring to the prospects of religion in England, he said: "They are so disgusted in England with that kind of thing, that a new religion, or an old religion revived, would scarcely make its fortune there." This was the calm and deliberate verdict of the accomplished Frenchman, and his words faithfully and unquestionably echoed the predominant opinion of England itself.

When blatant scepticism triumphantly predicted the overthrow of religion, and good men mourned the spiritual darkness and degeneracy, God was equipping and marshalling new forces, not to establish a "new religion," but to "revive an old religion." Neither England's intellectual, social, nor religious life gave any sign of mighty evangelical revival; on the contrary, the "Watchmen" looked in vain for the morning. But though Jerusalem mourned, "The day of her redemption drew nigh." The saviours of England were not among the valiant veterans of those days, they were not among the "Watchmen on the walls," they had "not proved" the armour of the mighty warriors. Far away from the noise of the battle, a few Oxford students were being drawn together by a desire for spiritual conversation and sympathy. Little dreamt the students who sneered at the devout desire of these young men, of the far-reaching and all-powerful potentialities of the "Holy Club"! Who would have searched among the "Methodists" of Oxford for the herald, the singer and preacher, and the great central figure of the "old religion revived"? and no human wisdom would have looked to the little hamlet of Trevecca for the Apostle of Wales.

A biographer of John Wesley calls attention to this remarkable coincidence: that Voltaire and Wesley trod at the same moment the soil of Britain, and that both, viewing a great nation corroded by scepticism and blighted by iniquity, formed opinions of a totally diverse nature. Voltaire lived in England from 1726 to 1729, and towards the end of 1729 he predicted the downfall of religion. The Holy Club was formed in the years 1728-9, and in November, 1729, John Wesley became the recognised leader of the Oxford Methodists.

This brief review of the religious condition of England will enable the reader to appreciate the motives of the great founders of Methodism, and to sympathise with them in the difficulties of their labours. The work reveals the workers, and those who understand Methodism revere the memory of the Founders.

The Holy Club.

Oxford may justly claim the honour of being "The Birthplace of Methodism." Reference has been made already to the "Holy Club," and to the conspicuous part which its three foremost members occupied in the great Revival. That club was the

THE HOLY CLUB.

cradle of Methodism, and a brief account of its origin and peculiarities will undoubtedly be read with interest.

In the year 1727 John Wesley quitted Oxford to assist his venerable father in discharging the parochial and pastoral duties of Epworth, in Lincolnshire. Two years later, at the earnest solicitation of the rector of his College, he returned to resume his tutoral duties.

During his absence from the University, his brother Charles passed through a crisis in his religious life. Longing for sympathy and guidance, he opened his heart to one or two of his fellow-students: they resolved to form a little society—half literary, half religious. This association of earnest and devout young men, bound together by ties of friendship and a common sense of spiritual wants, sprang up quite spontaneously, and was not long in becoming a centre of spiritual life and power. The members agreed to conform to all the rules of their college, and as it is a rubric that the students should take the sacrament every Sunday, they began to do so. Ere long a young gentleman of Christ Church, struck with the exact regularity of their lives and studies, said, "Here is a new sect of Methodists sprung up." The name was quaint, and not inappropriate. On John Wesley's return, in November, 1729, the young "Methodists" immediately gathered around him, and he became the recognised leader. "Methodist" was not the only name given to the society. The "Reforming Club," the "Godly Club," the "Holy Club," "Sacramentarians," "Bible Moths," "Supererogation Men," and "Enthusiasts," were all in use. John Wesley was called the Curator, or Father of the Holy Club.* To-day the two names cherished by the Evangelical Church are Methodists and the Holy Club.

Oxford Methodists.

The earliest members of the club were "John Wesley, Fellow of Lincoln College; his brother Charles, Student of Christ Church; William Morgan, a commoner of Christ Church, the son of an Irish gentleman; and Robert Kirkham, of Merton College." Many men of excellent virtues were subsequently added to these, the most eminent of whom unquestionably were James Hervey and George Whitfield. Tyerman has promised to publish the story of the Oxford Methodists. What a valuable contribution to Christian literature!

Speaking of these young students, he says: "William Morgan's career was brief and painful; he was the first Methodist who passed the pearly gates of the Celestial City. Charles Wesley, in his incomparable hymns, left behind him one of the noblest

* Telford.

legacies that an uninspired man ever bequeathed to the Christian Church. George Whitfield was the prince of preachers—a glorious emblem of the apocalyptic angel flying through the midst of heaven with the good tidings of great joy unto all people. And James Hervey will be loved and honoured as long as there are men to appreciate the highest order of Christian piety and the most mellifluent compositions in the English language. The history of the Oxford Methodists is not, however, an unspotted one. . . . But, with all these drawbacks, the reader is challenged to produce a band of godly friends whose lives and labours have, upon the whole, issued in such an amount of blessing to mankind as that which resulted from the lives and labours of these students, who in 1735 were known as "Oxford Methodists."

After thus sketching the history of the Holy Club, we come to the three most prominent names in the great Revival—John and Charles Wesley, and George Whitfield, who may be justly termed The Founders of English Methodism.

John Wesley.

John Wesley, the central figure of the Great Methodist Revival, the man "who embodied in himself not this or that side of the vast movement, but the very movement itself," was born at Epworth Rectory, in Lincolnshire, on the 17th of June, 1703. He was a descendant of a long line of illustrious ancestors. Bartholomew Wesley, his great-grandfather, was the son of Sir Herbert Wesley, of Westleigh, Devonshire, and Elizabeth de Wellesley, of Dangan, co. Meath, Ireland. He married the daughter of Sir Henry Colley, of Kildare. His grand-father, John Wesley, married the daughter of the Patriarch of Dorchester, and niece of Fuller, the Church historian. His father, Samuel Wesley, married Susanah, the daughter of Dr. Samuel Annesley, "the St. Paul of the Nonconformists." The grand-father of Dr. Annesley was Viscount Valentia; his uncle, the first Earl of Anglesea.* Samuel Wesley became Rector of Epworth in 1697, where, six years later, his son John was born.

When only eleven years of age he was nominated by the Duke of Buckingham on the foundation of Charterhouse. His Grace had long been a friend of the Wesleys. John Wesley's quietness, regularity, and application made him a special favourite with Dr. Walker, the head-master. In 1720 Wesley was elected to Christ Church, Oxford, one of the noblest colleges in that seat of learning, and here he continued until after his ordination in 1725.† He was elected Fellow of Lincoln College in 1726, where he remained, with the exception of two years spent at

* Telford. † Tyerman.

Epworth, until he went out to Georgia in 1735. His life at Georgia was not pleasant, and he returned to England in 1738. Soon after his return the great Methodist movement began, and for fifty-three years this remarkable man occupied the foremost position in it. Space compels us to curtail the biographical sketch of this truly great and good reformer. No words could convey an adequate conception of John Wesley. Lord Macaulay's judgment is an eloquent tribute to his greatness: "A man whose eloquence and logical acuteness might have made him eminent in literature; whose genius for government was not inferior to that of Richelieu; and who, whatever his errors may have been, devoted all his powers, in defiance of obloquy and derision, to what he sincerely considered the highest good of his species." "His distinguishing qualities were great power of organization, unbounded devotedness of property and strength to the welfare of men, and a wonderful faculty of dealing with his fellows, man by man, as Whitfield had the power to deal with them in masses."—(Dr. Angus.)

John Wesley died at City Road, London, February 23rd, 1791, in his eighty-seventh year. After his return from Georgia, he preached more than forty-two thousand, four hundred sermons, or an average of more than fifteen a week. "His public life stands out in the history of the world, unquestionably pre-eminent in religious labours, above that of any other man since the Apostolic Age." *

Six months before his death the venerable evangelist paid his last visit to Brecon.

Charles Wesley.

The sweet singer of Methodism—the founder of Methodism in Brecon—was five years younger than John Wesley. Charles was educated at Westminster, under the tuition of his brother, Samuel Wesley, who was usher in the school. Dr. Stevens says, that while at Westminster an incident occurred which might have changed considerably the history not only of Methodism, but of the British empire. Garrett Wesley of Ireland, proposed to adopt and settle upon him his estate. His father must have favoured the offer; but Charles resolutely declined the proposition. Richard Colley was adopted in his stead. This gentleman passed through several public offices. . . . Under George II. he became Baron Mornington. He was the grandfather of the Duke of Wellington, the conqueror of Napoleon. Had the wish of Garret Wesley been accomplished, the name of the Duke of Wellington and the hymns of Charles Wesley might not to-day be known wherever the English language is spoken.

* Dr. Stevens.

Charles Wesley, when about eighteen years old, was elected to Christ Church, Oxford. He remained at the University until 1735, when he embarked for Georgia with his brother. His stay was very short, for he returned to England the following year. Mr Telford calls him "the hymnist and the preacher" of the Great Revival. He was a man of culture, and a preacher of extraordinary power. Charles was the first member of the Holy Club, the first to receive the name of "Methodist." "On the 29th of March, 1788, this great light of Methodism sank below the horizon, but its rays will brighten the sky until the song of the Church militant is exchanged for the anthem of the Church triumphant."* His Ministry of Song has done much to quicken the spiritual life of believers in Christ. He composed more than six thousand hymns, some of which are unequalled in the whole domain of poetry.

Charles Wesley married Sarah Gwynne, the daughter of Marmaduke Gwynne, Esq., of Garth. A detailed account of Marmaduke Gwynne and Mrs. Charles Wesley will be found in Chapter III.

George Whitfield,

The herald of Methodism, was born in 1714, at the Bell Inn, Gloucester, of which his mother was the landlady. When about fifteen years old, "he put on his blue apron and his snuffers," washed mops, cleaned rooms, and became a "common drawer" in the Gloucester tavern. Hearing of the possibility of obtaining an education at Oxford as a servitor, or "poor student," he prepared himself and went thither, and afterwards provided for his expenses chiefly by serving his fellow-collegians.† The fame of the Wesleys and the Oxford Methodists had reached the quiet inn at Gloucester, and Whitfield entered the University fully prepared to admire and to imitate them.‡ For a year he longed to meet them, but no opportunity presented itself, though he often gazed at them with deep emotion as they passed through a satirical crowd to receive the eucharist at St. Mary's.

At last the golden opportunity came, and George Whitfield, the future Baptist of the great Revival, was introduced to Charles Wesley, the hymnist and the preacher of the mighty movement.

Charles Wesley admired the young enthusiast, and forthwith introduced him to the Holy Club. This was in 1735. During the absence of the Wesleys in America, Whitfield was the presiding spirit of the Oxford Methodists. He was ordained by the Bishop of Gloucester, and preached his first sermon in the church where he had been baptized. He revealed at once his extraordinary powers. It was reported to the bishop that fifteen of his hearers had gone mad. The prelate only wished

* Dr. Stevens. † Dr. Stevens. ‡ Miss Waddy.

that the madness might not pass away before another Sabbath. Thus auspiciously commenced the ministry of the great Baptist of Methodism.

Fitted by every attribute of his nature for the work of an evangelist, he aroused the country with his matchless eloquence and noble efforts. London and Bristol churches were crowded with vast multitudes, who eagerly waited for the impassioned message of this mighty ambassador of the Cross.

He followed the two Wesleys to Georgia, passing, however, on his voyage out, the ship that brought John Wesley home. Whitfield was happier and more successful in the colony than his friends had been. They were rigid disciplinarians, he an eloquent preacher; but his stay among the colonists was brief. After spending four months in Georgia, he embarked for England in 1738.

Mysterious providence of God!—Wesley approaching the coast of England when Whitfield was preparing to leave it. His powerful ministry aroused the Metropolis, and no sooner had he departed for Georgia, to the joy of those who dreaded the excesses of his zeal, than Wesley arrived there to deepen and widen the impression which his more eloquent co-adjutor had made.

On his return from America, Wesley hastened to greet him. The Wesleys had shared his popularity. Their evangelistic propaganda augured auspiciously. Metropolitan and provincial churches were thrown open to them. Gradually, however, ecclesiastical prejudice and bigotry viewed with mistrust the remarkable popularity of these "fanatical Methodists," and God's Temples were closed against God's priests. When denied the churches, Whitfield preached in the open-air, the Wesleys soon following his example. Whitfield's influence on the Wesleys was most wholesome. They were tenacious of Church order and ecclesiastical precedents, but Whitfield, with his sanctified common-sense, ranked Church order second to the work of saving souls.

What can be said of the transcendent pulpit powers of Whitfield?

He was a man of unquestionable genius, of profound religious feeling, of untiring zeal, of blameless reputation, peerless as a pulpit orator. Hume said it was worth while travelling twenty miles to hear him. Foote and Garrick considered him unequalled. Franklin, a model of economic prudence, was so wrought upon under one of his collection sermons, that he literally emptied his pockets into the plate. Pulteney, Bolingbroke, Chesterfield, and others, esteemed him highly. Ladies of rank, under his ministry, joined the Methodists, and supported the church of their choice.

This remarkable man finished his career at Newburyport, America, on the 30th of September, 1770.

CHAPTER II.

THE FOUNDERS OF WELSH METHODISM.

"God's witnesses; the voices of His will
Heard in the slow march of the centuries still."—WHITTIER.

WALES did not escape the disastrous degeneracy which followed the Restoration. Sombre indeed is the account which trustworthy chroniclers furnish us of the Principality when the great spiritual awakening of the eighteenth century began. Religion and morality had sunk low, spiritual darkness covered the land. Drunkenness, gluttony, and licentiousness prevailed everywhere. Athletic sports and rustic dances were common on the Lord's Day. The Church was almost totally inert; many papal superstitions still lingered among the peasantry.

Wesley, speaking of the Welsh peasantry after his first visit, says: "They are as little versed in the principles of Christianity as a Creek or a Cherokee Indian." The day of Wales' redemption had, however, dawned when Wesley spoke thus.

The Morning Star of Wales.

In the little village of Llanddowror, in the county of Carmarthen, Griffith Jones, the earnest and God-fearing vicar of that parish, bravely attempted to counteract the baneful influence of the spiritual darkness of his parishioners. He established a school to teach the peasantry to read the Word of God. Encouraged and assisted in his noble work by a heroic band of Christians, the good man extended his labours, and thus commenced, in 1737, contemporaneously with Whitfield's mighty ministry in London, those circulating schools, which so prepared the Principality for the advent of Harris, Rowlands, and Davies.

How efficiently these schools accomplished their high purpose may be gathered from the fact, that at the time of the founder's death, they had been instrumental in teaching over one hundred and fifty thousand of the Welsh people to read God's Holy Word in their native tongue.

Griffith Jones was described in the *Glasgow Weekly History* of 1742, as "one of the most excellent preachers in Great Britain." Not a few of the teachers in his peripatetic schools became earnest Methodist preachers, two of whom became immortal in the annals of Christendom, viz., Howell Davies, the coadjutor of Harris and Rowlands in the great Revival; and Thomas Charles, of Bala, the founder of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Daniel Rowlands was also his son in the gospel.

The good vicar of Llanddowror, "The Morning Star of the Welsh Reformation," died in the year 1761.

Howel Harris.

If John Wesley is considered the central figure of universal Methodism, Howel Harris is the central figure of Welsh Methodism. And, inasmuch as Harris's birthplace, sphere of labour, and resting-place are within the boundaries of the Brecon Circuit, a more lengthy biographical sketch of him will be expected.

He was born at a farmhouse called Trevecca Fawr, in the parish of Talgarth, January 23rd, 1714, the year in which Whitfield was born, and the one following that in which Rowlands was born. He was intended for the ministry of the Established Church. In March, 1735, when twenty-one years of age he became the subject of deep and powerful religious impressions. In November of the same year he entered St. Mary's Hall, in Oxford, but the blessed work of grace, which had commenced in his heart at the communion table in Talgarth Church, made him impatient of the infidelity and immorality which prevailed at Oxford, and he determined to quit the University at the expiration of the first term. Tempting offers were powerless to induce him to return thither. A gentleman promised him the head-mastership of a Grammar School, and an incumbency which would bring him an additional salary of £140 per annum, if he would go through the usual course at the University. But Harris refused; a Higher Hand led him to other fields of labour.

Harris's conversion and entrance to Oxford furnish another coincidence in that remarkable series which marked the rise of Methodism. His conversion took place just about the time Whitfield joined the Oxford Methodists, and he entered the University a month after the Wesleys had embarked for Georgia.

On his return to Trevecca, Harris visited the cottages of the neglected poor, and spoke to them the truth as it is in Jesus. His speaking developed into preaching, and thus unconsciously began that mighty ministry, which, when

> "Neither presbyter, priest, nor prophet was awake,"

aroused Cambria from the torpor of ages, and inaugurated the Welsh Revival.

Harris's preaching dates from the year 1736. He was, therefore, Methodism's First Lay Preacher. The advocates of Church Order denounced his itinerancies as "irregularities." The Vicar of Talgarth ejected him from the mastership of the school, which was held in the parish church, and threatened him with legal proceedings if he desisted not from these irregularities.

Many of the neighbouring clergy countenanced the persecution of the Vicar, and Harris was branded as a "deceiver and a false prophet." Harris would not be silenced. The "ordained priesthood" might denounce and persecute, but God commanded him to speak. The Early Methodists "obeyed God rather than man."

His so-called irregularities produced a profound impression in the counties of Brecknock and Radnor. Great power accompanied his ministry, "and signs and wonders were wrought in the name of the holy child Jesus."

Harris and Whitfield.

In the midst of his successful labours, God sent him a message of comfort. When ecclesiastical prejudice branded him as a "fanatic" and a "deceiver of the people," he heard with gladness of heart of Whitfield and the Wesleys' powerful ministry in England, and from the banks of the Ayron came the tidings of the conversion and burning ministry of Daniel Rowlands. Their prosperity cheered the "unordained evangelist," and the great Head of the Church destined these men to become fellow-labourers.

Whitfield arrived in London from Georgia December, 1738, and news of Howel Harris's labours must have reached him after his return, for we find that he requested the Welsh evangelist to meet him in Cardiff early in 1739. Whitfield crossed the channel from Kingswood, where he had been preaching in the open-air to the colliers. They met, and formed a friendship fraught with issues of far-reaching consequences.

Whitfield says he found Harris "a burning and shining light, a barrier against profanity and immorality, and an indefatigable promoter of the Gospel of Christ. During the previous three years he had preached almost twice every day for three or four hours together, and in his evangelistic tours had visited seven counties, and established nearly thirty societies; and still his sphere of action was enlarging daily."

The Vicar of Talgarth characterised Harris's labours as "Irregularities." The great Baptist of the Revival termed them "Evangelistic tours," and the verdict of the Church of Christ favours Whitfield's description.

Harris and Rowlands.

Harris heard in the year 1738 of Daniel Rowland's rousing and successful ministry in Llangeithio. Circumstances soon transpired which brought these earnest men together. Rowlands, the ordained clergyman, fraternised with the unordained layman. They acknowledged the hand of God in the awaken-

ing. The good work was extending, and steps were taken to organize and consolidate the newly-formed churches. The "Monthly Meetings" and the "Association" were established, and the first Association met at Watford, in Glamorganshire, in 1742. Whitfield was invited to attend, and to preside over its deliberations. Beside the chairman, there were present Daniel Rowlands, Howel Harris, William Williams, the immortal bard of Pantycelyn, and other preachers.

Whitfield was doubtless preferred before John Wesley, the "Father of the Holy Club," to attend the first Welsh Association on account of his Calvinistic views, views which the Welsh Revivalists adopted from the beginning.

Rowlands and Harris were the recognised leaders of Revival in Wales. Inspired by a quenchless passion for the redemption of their country, they laboured with untiring zeal.

Controversy and Separation.

The great Founders of Methodism were of "one mind and one heart" in prosecuting their high mission, but in questions of doctrines and discipline they frequently differed, and their differences occasioned separation. Wesley and Whitfield differed and separated. So did Harris and Rowlands. The misunderstanding between these truly apostolic men began as early as 1745, and culminated in a separation at the Llanidloes Association in 1751. The new movement was divided into two parties, known respectively as "Harris's people" and "Rowlands's people." Disastrous were the consequences of that controversy, and many regard the separation as the grand mistake of Harris's life.

Wales sustained an irreparable loss. The indefatigable Itinerant retired to Trevecca, and in 1752 laid the foundation of the "Great House," wherein he exercised his ministry for years and trained young men for the service of God. "And the contention was so sharp between them that they departed asunder one from the other."

Harris and Wesley.

Harris had met Whitfield in Cardiff in February of the year 1739, and in the month of June of that year, Methodism's first lay preacher met Methodism's greatest evangelist and legislator in Bristol.

Mr. Tyerman gives us to understand that the meeting was arranged at Wesley's urgent request. Writing in his journals under date Monday, June 18th, 1739, Wesley says:—"Howel Harris called upon me. He said he had been much dissuaded from either hearing or seeing me, by many who said all manner of evil of me. 'But,' said he, 'as soon as I heard you preach, I

quickly found of what spirit you were, and before you had done, I was so overpowered with joy that I had much to do to walk home.' "

Prejudice strove to embitter the good man against Wesley, but God foiled it, and the ardent Welshman quickly discerned in Wesley a man of God. Harris speaking of Wesley on that occasion, says: "He was greatly enlarged in prayer for me, and for Wales." Full of holy feeling the Apostle of Wales crossed the channel, and found wider fields of influence than ever.

The friendship of Wesley and Harris grew with the lapse of years. Amid his many labours the earnest Evangelist found opportunities to visit the Great House at Trevecca.

1739! Memorable year in the history of the Methodist Revival! Harris and Whitfield met. Harris and Wesley wrestled in prayer together. Wesley met the "eight or ten persons in London," and thus laid down the foundation of the Methodist Church. Wesley purchased and preached in the Old Foundry, the cradle of Methodism. Whitfield preached in the open air at Kingswood. Wesley, the High Churchman, followed his example, and for fifty-two years continued to do so, and proved himself the greatest out-door preacher that ever lived.

Countess of Huntingdon.

Brecon Methodism brings another name of historic interest in connection with the development of the great Revival into prominence, viz., Selina, Countess of Huntingdon. This noble and illustrious lady identified herself with the new movement in its infancy. She purchased theatres, halls, and dilapidated chapels in London, Bristol, and Dublin, and fitted them up for public worship. Her zeal and munificence provided places of worship faster than they could be supplied by Methodist preachers. To supply this deficiency, she conceived the idea of establishing a seminary for the training of devoted men for the ministry.

Her Ladyship greatly benefitted universal Methodism. Now, however, we are more directly concerned with her connection with Methodism in Brecon and the neighbourhood.

Her first visit to Trevecca occurred in the year 1748. Accompanied by her daughters, and Lady Anne, and Lady Frances Hastings, she journeyed through parts of Wales in that year. The Countess had invited the most eminent of the Welsh evangelists to meet her at Bristol, and to accompany her in her travels. Accordingly Howel Harris, Griffiths Jones, Daniel Rowlands, and Howell Davies met her. They travelled as far as Trevecca, a spot which twenty years later became her chief residence and scene of action.

COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON.

Trevecca College.

The little hamlet which the name of Howel Harris has immortalised, is situate about ten miles from Brecon, and in the same county. It was fixed upon by the Countess for the projected College. Trevecca House, an ancient structure, supposed to be part of an old castle erected in the reign of Henry the Second, was purchased and renovated, and on the 24th of August, 1768, the anniversary of the Countess's birthday, the College was opened by Whitfield, who preached from Exodus xx. 24.

Many historic gatherings took place at Trevecca. Methodism's mightiest men met there. The temptation to linger and describe some of these gatherings is great, but it must be resisted. Who can think of them without exclaiming, What matchless men God raised for the great awakening! At the first anniversary of the College in August, 1769, such an "assembly of kings" as John Wesley, George Whitfield, John Fletcher, Walter Shirley, Rowlands (Llangeitho), Williams (Pantycelyn), Peter Williams (Carmarthen), Howel Harris, Howell Davies, and others met there. The meetings were graced with the presence of several "elect ladies," among whom were the Countess of Huntingdon, the Countess of Buchan, Lady Anne Erskine, Miss Orton, and others. An "amazing concourse of people collected from all parts," and above all "God was in the camp."

The name of the Countess of Huntingdon will ever remain sacred in the history of Methodism. Seven years after Whitfield separated from Wesley, the Countess invited him to preach in her mansion at Chelsea. He consented. Her residence was a resort for the highest classes of the fashionable and aristocratic world. Many notable men heard the truth from his eloquent lips. Lord Chesterfield listened to him with delight, and several of his noble relations were claimed by Whitfield as his spiritual trophies; his wife and her sister, the Countess Delitz, died in the faith. Horace Walpole heard him with admiration. Many ladies of the highest aristocratic rank became "devout women" and ornaments of the Christian Church, among them the Marchioness of Lothian, Countess of Leven, Lady Balgonie, Lady Gardiner, Lady Nimmo, Lady Mary Hamilton, and others.—(Dr. Stevens). Thus Methodism through the influence of Lady Huntingdon reached the "nobles of England."

Like Wesley, the Countess was strongly attached to the Church of England, but in order to protect her chapels from suppression or appropriation by the Established Church, she had to avail herself in 1779 of the Toleration Act. Her "Connexion" thus took its place among the Nonconformist Churches.

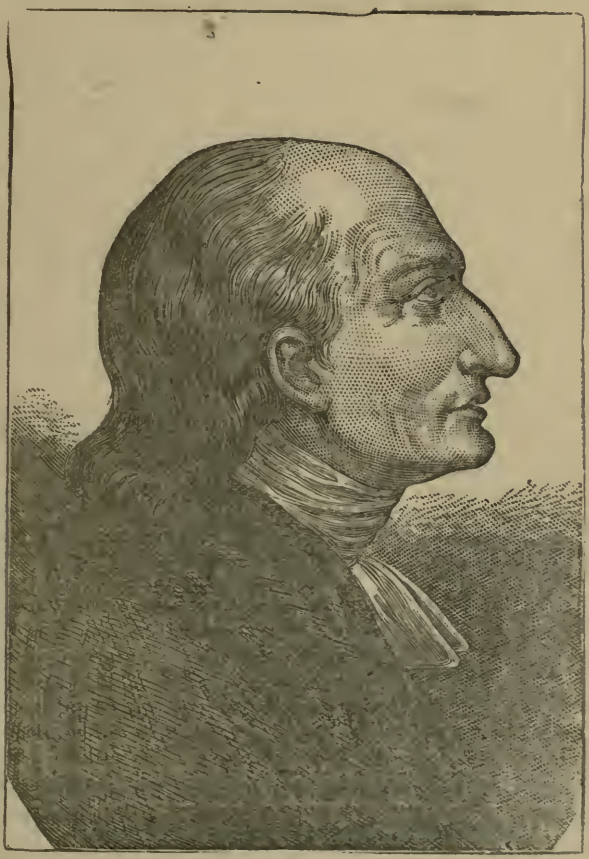
At the extreme age of eighty-four this remarkable woman died, uttering with her last breath, "My work is done; I have

nothing to do but to go to my Father." She bequeathed £5000 for charities, and the residue of her fortune for the support of sixty-four chapels she had built in various parts of the kingdom. No woman has done more by direct labour and liberality for the promotion of genuine religion.

The Calvinistic Chapel in the Struet, Brecon, was erected by the Countess in 1771.

Fletcher of Madeley.

Trevecca was Methodism's first college, and this "school of the prophets" had for its first president one of the most holy men that ever lived—the saintly Fletcher of Madeley. Mr.



JOHN FLETCHER.

Easterbrook, afterwards Vicar of the Temple, was the first headmaster, and James Glazebrook, a collier from Madeley, the first student.

Wesleyan readers will be interested to know that on the resignation of Mr. Easterbrook, after a very brief term, Joseph Benson, the eminent Wesleyan commentator, became principal, but when the Calvinistic controversy broke out, Fletcher and Benson's connection with Trevecca ceased. They adopted the Arminian theology. The former resigned the presidency of the College and the latter was dismissed, and Trevecca became a Calvinistic institution until the College was removed to Cheshunt in 1792.

Howel Harris as a Preacher.

Methodism's first lay preacher is described as "a veritable Boanerges." "We can judge," says one, "from his portrait that he was a person of most commanding presence. The owner of those flashing eyes and firmly set mouth was not a man to be trifled with. Often were giants in iniquity, who had come for the express purpose of disturbing the services, made to quail before his fiery glance, or driven home trembling in every limb after listening for a few minutes to the thunder of his voice. A congregation of two thousand has been known to stand for two hours in a drenching rain to hear him preach.*

The zealous Evangelist traversed the Principality proclaiming the everlasting Gospel. Success accompanied his ministry. A nucleus of a religious community was formed in almost every town, village, and hamlet he visited.

Persecution and prejudice strove to silence him, but his indomitable spirit fearlessly faced and conquered them. Infuriated mobs roughly used him; the gentry threatened him with legal proceedings; the clergy denounced him as a false prophet. But "none of these things moved him." Tyrannical magistrates would read the Riot Act while he preached. Harris would reply by reading with a voice of thunder the judgment pronounced by the Judge of all upon their own guilty souls.

Noble man of God! His heroic labours ended on the 21st of July, 1773. Twenty thousand persons attended the funeral, to mourn this "prince and great man in Israel." His remains were buried near the altar in Talgarth Church.†

Daniel Rowlands.

Rowlands did for Wales what Whitfield did for England; his unsurpassed eloquence stirred the whole Principality, and prepared it for the ministry of his fellow-labourers. Rowlands

* Williams's "Methodism in Wales." † See Talgarth, Chap. XI.

had entered the ministry of the Established Church a godless man, and being gigantic in body, he descended from the pulpit to excel in the Sunday athletic games of his parishioners. Griffith Jones, of Llanddowror, crossed his path. Rowlands went to hear him through curiosity mixed with scorn; his biographers describe him as standing before the preacher in front of the pulpit with a look of disdain, which soon changed into seriousness, and at last to penitence; and the old Evangelist saw in him already an Elisha, who he prayed might be destined to succeed him. He now became a changed man; his preaching became more powerful than that of his teacher; it is described "like thunder among the Welsh mountains."

Jones, Harris, Whitfield, and Wesley recognized him, and he, too, became known as one of the Methodists who were turning the world upside down. Multitudes followed him. His overwhelming eloquence kindled the fervid Welsh enthusiasm, and all Cambria was ablaze.

Persecution strenuously endeavoured to silence him, but utterly failed. Ecclesiastical tyranny was equally futile. His bishop warned him, and at last his license was revoked.

God owned him. From every part of Wales, from the mouth of the Wye up to the Dovey and the Conway, people flocked, like the Israelites to Jerusalem, in order to hear the eloquence and to receive the Sacrament from the hands of one who had acquired the dignity of a martyr.*

Memorable services were held at Llangeithio. The appearance of the mountains and the valleys threaded by vast multitudes of people is described as picturesque and affecting, and the services in Llangeithio Church unequalled for mighty power. Rowlands was a greater preacher than Harris. He possessed extraordinary powers of mind, and was a speaker of remarkable force, but the secret of his tremendous influence must be sought for in the depth and intensity of his religious convictions. Once in his prayer before the sermon, while dwelling on the sufferings of the Saviour for men, he seemed to have Him before his eye, and exclaimed, "Oh, those emptied veins! Oh, that pallid countenance!" and then, overwhelmed by emotion, he fainted.†

Multitudes hung on his lips for hours together. It is said that on one Sabbath morning he preached with extraordinary unction, and the people were unconscious of the flight of time until a ray of light coming in through the western window made them aware of the fact that the sun was about to set.

He survived Harris seventeen years, and led the revival with unflagging energy. Charles of Bala survived Rowlands, and gave to Calvinistic Methodism its ecclesiastical organization.

This great herald of Welsh Methodism died in 1790.

* Dr. Stevens. † Williams's "Welsh Methodism."

Howell Davies.

This earnest clergyman was, as we have already seen, one of Griffith Jones's scholars at Llanddowror. He was ordained to the curacy of Llysyfran, in Pembrokeshire. The evangelistic fervour of his illustrious teacher greatly influenced him. Multitudes flocked to hear him, but his "Methodism" was offensive to some of his most respectable (!) parishioners, and Davies was dismissed. Strange inconsistency! So-called Christians objecting to a soul-saving ministry; preferring half-empty churches and a perfunctory and unreal discharge of the duties of the sacred office, to crowded sanctuaries and earnest ministrations! Davies was dismissed but not silenced. His popularity increased. "He had more than two thousand communicants, and it is said that his church had often to be emptied twice to make way for a third congregation to receive the Lord's Supper from his hands. His name is of continual recurrence in the contemporary Methodist writings, for he was a burning and shining light."—(Dr. Stevens).

He died in the year 1770, the same year as Whitfield.

Recapitulation.

In the foregoing chapter we have briefly sketched the origin and development of the Great Awakening, and also conveyed some idea of the Founders of English and Welsh Methodism.

With the exception of Howel Harris, the eminent Methodist Fathers were ordained clergymen of the Church of England, but their ecclesiastical superiors refused to sanction their "irregularities," churches were closed against them, parsons and their patrons persecuted and denounced them. But God was with them, and the great Revival, which they had fondly hoped would have quickened the Established Church, was over-ruled by the providence of God, and the great Methodist Church was founded.

The Methodist Founders possessed talents of the highest order, and the mysterious way in which the Great Head of the Church brought these men to co-operate in the Awakening, is of itself a sufficient proof that He intended them to do something more than to quicken existing churches.

Griffith Jones's circulating schools prepared the people to read God's holy word; Harris's irregularities and successful ministry proved a higher than Episcopal ordination, and his itinerances aroused the Principality; whilst Rowlands' and Davies' unequalled eloquence carried conviction to the heart of the King's enemies; and Whitfield prepared both hemispheres for Methodism. But these were only the initial steps; more was needed. The great awakening wanted its songs of triumph and rejoicing. The spirit of God touched the lyre of Williams,

Pantycelyn, and Charles Wesley, and they left in their incomparable hymns one of the noblest legacies that uninspired men ever bequeathed to the Christian Church. Yet, more was wanted. When these Elijahs would pass away, where were the Elishas to receive the mantle of the ascending prophets? Where was the school of the prophets? The ancient and illustrious colleges of Oxford and Cambridge were closed against Nonconformists. God's purposes are not to be frustrated by men's prejudice, and the "elect lady" established Trevecca, the saintly Fletcher stamped the impress of his own lofty character on the students, and the learned and profound Benson expounded the doctrines of Christianity. Yet, two more things were needed. The great movement, if it was to be perpetuated, required organization, and to be supplied with the Word of God. Wesley, with his consummate organizing genius, supplied the first, and Charles, of Bala, the second. Wesley gave Methodism a matchless ecclesiastical system, and Charles gave the world the Bible Society. (This organization was first suggested to Charles by the pleading of a Welsh girl to procure a Bible of her own.)

Did the work, so gloriously and auspiciously inaugurated, realise its early promise? Let statistics supply the answer. In 1888, Arminian Methodism has 34,255 ordained ministers, and 5,582,386 church members, and over twenty-five million adherents. "What hath God wrought!"

What about the Principality: has the great work which was cradled in the little hamlet of Trevecca prospered? Dr. Rees, in his very able "History of Protestant Nonconformity in Wales," gives the numerical strength of the largest Nonconformist Churches in Wales in 1882 in these words: "The tables show that the Nonconformists of Wales have 4,361 places of worship, 1,934 ordained ministers, 2,469 lay preachers, 361,406 church members, and no less than 463,468 children and adults receiving instruction in their Sabbath schools. . . . The population of Wales and Monmouthshire in 1861 was 1,286,411, and in 1881, 1,571,267, an increase of 22·14 per cent., and the increase of the church members in the four largest denominations during the same period was as follows:—

Baptists ...	...	48·21 per cent.
Calvinistic Methodists ...	...	31·79 ,,
Wesleyan Methodists ...	...	31·77 ,,
Congregationalists ...	...	23·55 ,,

It is a matter of joy and devout thanksgiving that the increase of each of the four denominations is more in proportion than the population."

Remarkable record of success! In 1715 there were only thirty Nonconformist chapels in the Principality, and in 1736, when Harris and Rowlands began their labours, only six in all North Wales. Sixty-four years later, in 1810, they numbered nearly a

thousand. Seventy-two years later, in 1882, they had increased to four thousand, three hundred and sixty-one!

"Through the self-denying labours of our active and suffering forefathers, Wales has been changed from a wilderness of irreligion and superstition into a well-cultivated garden of evangelical Protestant Nonconformity. Shall the ground so cultivated and planted by the incomparable industry of former generations, and watered by their tears, be again permitted to be over-run by the poisonous nightshades of infidelity or the worthless weeds of superstition? God forbid that such should ever be the case."—(Dr. Rees).

Brecon Methodism has made great progress since the days of Harris and Wesley, and it is a distinguished honour to the Circuit that it embraces within its boundaries the birthplace of the Methodist Church of the Principality.

Other brilliant trophies were won for God and Christianity through Methodism in the Brecon Circuit, as we shall presently see.

CHAPTER III.

ENGLISH WESLEYAN METHODISM IN WALES AND INTRODUCTION INTO BRECON.

"See how great a flame aspires,
Kindled by a spark of grace;
Jesu's love the nations fires,
Sets the kingdoms in a blaze."—WESLEY.

We have seen that the Methodist Revival was a simultaneous movement in different parts of the country. It was not the outcome of a pre-concerted plan, but a spontaneous awakening. Isolated streams watered and fertilized the narrow valleys through which their course ran. Human wisdom never anticipated the possibility of their confluence; in fact, nothing seemed more improbable than that the rivulets which sprang in Llanddowror in Carmarthenshire, Llysyfran in Pembrokeshire, Llangeithio in Cardiganshire, Trevecca, Breconshire, the Bell Inn, Gloucester, and Epworth Rectory in Lincolnshire, would ever co-mingle and flow a majestic river to make glad the city of God, and to convert the wilderness into a garden. Such, however, was the divine purpose, and no power could frustrate it.

In the year 1741, the great English Founders separated on a question of theology. Wesley adopted the Arminian doctrine, and Whitfield the Calvinistic view of man's freewill and divine

sovereignty. For ages this subject has stirred the Christian world. From the days of St. Augustine it had been the great theological battle-ground of the West. In the days of the Reformation it rent Protestantism into two hostile sections, and turned Lutheran and Calvinist into deadly foes. It divided the Evangelical Revival into two camps. Grave and long was the strife of opinion. Wesley and his adherents worshipped in the Old Foundry, and Whitfield exercised his mighty ministry in the Tabernacle.

The Welsh Founders were Calvinists, and Wesley's conduct reveals his magnanimity and nobleness of character. He never attempted to divide Welsh Methodism. Believing that the ministry of his illustrious fellow-workers was sufficient for the Welsh-speaking people, he did not interfere; but, when forced by others, he made provision for the English people who resided in the Principality. The work of establishing Welsh Wesleyan Methodism was left to the eminent Breconians, Dr. Coke and John Hughes.

John and Charles Wesley frequently visited Wales before any attempt was made to form Wesleyan and Calvinistic Churches; indeed, the Wesley family became inseparably connected with the Principality, and especially with Breconshire, and inasmuch as the Methodism of Brecon is the direct result of that connection, it should be mentioned here. A record in Wesley's journal will furnish the necessary information. May 4th, 1743, at the invitation of Mr. Phillips, the rector of Maesmennys, the great Evangelist paid his first visit to Breconshire. Arriving at Builth in the afternoon, he "preached on a tomb at the east end of the church, at four and again at seven. Mr. Gwynne and Mr. Prothero (Justices of the Peace) stood on either hand of me, and all the people before catching every word, with the most serious and eager attention." This extract furnishes the necessary explanation, "Mr. Gwynne, Justice of the Peace." He was

Marmaduke Gwynne, Esquire, of Garth,

the zealous Methodist magistrate, and the father of Sarah Gwynne, the devoted, beautiful, and cultured wife of Charles Wesley.

No historical sketch of Methodism in Wales would be complete if it did not assign to Marmaduke Gwynne of Garth a position of honour, and the story of Methodism in Brecon would be greatly marred unless it related the connection of Mr. Gwynne with the great Revival and the Wesleys. Dr. Stevens gives a very interesting account of him:—"In Wales the Wesleys were entertained at the opulent mansion of M. Gwynne, a magistrate, of Garth. His princely establishment usually comprised, besides his nine children and twenty servants, a chaplain and from ten

to fifteen guests. . . . The Wesleys preached to them daily while seeking repose amid their liberal hospitality. Mr. Gwynne zealously promoted their peculiar views. He was one of the first influential citizens of Wales who had befriended Howel Harris in his evangelical labours."

When Harris was first expected to preach near Garth, Mr. Gwynne was determined to arrest him, not doubting from current report that he was a madman or "an incendiary in Church and State." He went out with the Riot Act in his pocket, but said to his lady as he left her, "I will hear him for myself before I commit him." Harris stood near the Llanwrtyd churchyard, and delivered his message with power. The magistrate was deeply affected, and thought the preacher resembled one of the apostles. When the sermon was over he stepped to Harris, grasped his hand, expressed his agreeable disappointment, besought his pardon, bade him God-speed, and to the astonishment and surprise of the assembly invited him to accompany him to Garth to supper. Thus was the magistrate of Garth won to Methodism, and the Principality owes to his munificent zeal much of the evangelical improvement which the great Revival effected among its population.

His name appears in Wesley's early minutes as a lay member of his Conferences.

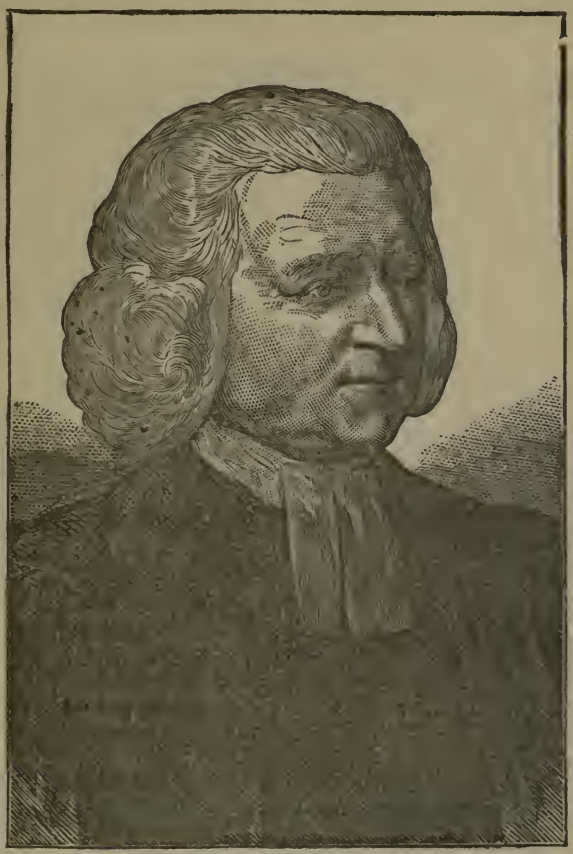
Sarah Gwynne and Charles Wesley.

Howel Harris led Mr. Gwynne to Methodism, but the Gwynne family was destined to become more intimately connected with the movement and its founders.

April 8th, 1749, Sarah, the daughter of Mr. Gwynne, married Charles Wesley. In the annals of Breconshire no name occupies a more honourable position than that of the Gwynnes. The highest distinctions the county could confer have been bestowed on several members of this ancient and noble family, but no greater honour ever fell to the lot of the Gwynne family than that conferred on the 8th of April, 1749, in Garth church, when Sarah Gwynne took the name of Wesley.

The union of Charles Wesley and Sarah Gwynne was in all respects a blessed one. They established a comfortable home at Bristol, where Mrs. Wesley's hospitality refreshed the lay preachers on their journeys, and notwithstanding her cultivated tastes, learned to admire as among the noblest of men Nelson, Downes, Shent, and their heroic fellow-labourers. To the end of her life she spoke with emotion of these humble, but, in many respects, genuinely great and apostolic men. Her religious temper was in harmony with that of her husband. She often accompanied him in his ministerial travels. She was not only admired but beloved by her humbler sisters of the Societies, and

throughout her husband's life rendered his home a sanctuary of repose from his labours and of sympathy for his affections. She died on the 28th of December, 1822, at the age of ninety-six. Her long life was an unbroken scene of devoted piety in its loveliest forms, and her death was equally calm and beautiful.*



CHARLES WESLEY.

Charles Wesley's Children.

God blessed the union of Charles Wesley and Sarah Gwynne with eight children, four sons and four daughters, only three of whom, however, survived their father, namely—Charles, Sarah,

* Tyerman.

and Samuel. The interest of Brecon Methodists in the union of the illustrious Singer of Methodism with their fair countrywoman, tempts us to follow for a moment the fortunes of this family. The two grandsons of Marmaduke Gwynne, Charles and Samuel Wesley, inherited the musical talent of their father. They were musical prodigies, and gave concerts before the *elite* of London society with great success, and were shown marked favour by the royal family. The last days of the Hymnist of the Revival were embittered by the perversion of his son Samuel to the Church of Rome. This called forth from the old man one of the most touching poems in our language—

"Farewell, my all of earthly hopes."

But if the father had lived long enough, he would have seen Samuel leave the Roman Catholic Church in contempt, and become her public antagonist. He was eminent as a musical genius. When only eight years of age he composed the oratorio "Ruth." In later years he was considered the most remarkable extemporaneous player in Europe. Among his compositions were a grand *Mass* for the Chapel of Pope Pius VI. and a complete service for the Cathedrals of the Church of England.

Charles, Samuel Wesley's son, became Chaplain to the King's Household at St. James's in 1833, and subsequently Sub-deacon of Her Majesty's Chapel Royal, and in 1847 Chaplain to the Queen. He died at St. James's Palace on the 14th September, 1859.

The marriage of Charles Wesley and Sarah Gwynne of Garth gives to Brecon Methodism a position of honour in the history of the Methodist Church.

Itinerancy in Wales.

When did Wesley establish an itinerant ministry in Wales? This query naturally suggests itself here.

The late Rev. John Jones, one of the early Methodist preachers, a man who enjoyed the confidence of Mr. Wesley in a high degree, left MS. notes of some of the early Conferences, and the appointments to Wales are as follows:—

WALES.

1749.—William Thomas.
1753.—Francis Walker; William Darney.
1755.—John Brown; John Wesley.
1758.—Francis Walker; W. Harvey.

Competent authorities doubt the correctness of these notes. One thing, however, beyond doubt, is, that the English Societies in Wales were regularly supplied by the Wesleys and their preachers as early as 1749 or 1750,* and perhaps Mr. Jones's

* See Watton Chapel, Chap. VI.

notes merely record the action of the Conferences in appointing the above ministers to visit the Societies in the Principality. Although considerable doubt exists about the period between 1749 and 1761, the Minutes from 1761 up to the present time are complete with the exception of the years 1763-4. In 1761, Thomas Taylor, a native of Rothwell, near Leeds, was appointed to Wales.

Thomas Taylor, the pioneer of the itinerant ministry in Wales, commenced his labours at Chepstow; from thence he marched into Wales, preaching in the towns and villages until he reached Gower in February, 1762. He settled down there for some months, and established several churches. During the summer of that year he penetrated as far as Pembrokeshire. The earnest evangelist endured much hardships, especially in "passing over those dreadful mountains from Neath to Brecon." God crowned his labours with much success. At Gower, "the inhabitants of which were nearly heathens," the truth triumphed. His reception and prosperity in Pembrokeshire gladdened his heart. Tyerman, speaking of this heroic and indefatigable man, says :— "Thomas Taylor traversed mountains, forded rivers, and plunged through bogs, with an empty purse and an empty stomach, seeking to save sinners, with a zeal and a spirit of self-denial worthy of the noblest missionary that ever lived." He was elected President of the Conference in 1796 and in 1809. After fifty-six years of faithful and successful labour, he entered his Master's joy on the 16th of October, 1816.

In 1763, the courageous Taylor was sent to Ireland. Who succeeded him in Wales is merely a matter of conjecture ; but in 1765 Thomas Newall was appointed to Pembroke and Martin Rodda to Glamorganshire, to reside in Swansea. In 1766 the Wales Circuit was formed, and the appointed ministers were :

WALES CIRCUIT.

1766. George Story, Thomas Newall.
1767. George Hudson, Joseph Pilmoor, William Harry.
1768. George Hudson, Joseph Harper, Joseph Pilmoor, Moseley Cheek.

In 1769 two circuits were formed—Wales West Circuit (Pembrokeshire), and Wales East Circuit (Glamorganshire). The ministers were :—West Circuit: James Dempster, William Whittaker; East Circuit: William Pitt, William Barker.

The year 1770 witnessed another re-arrangement. North Wales Circuit, with Brecon for its principal station, appears in the Minutes; the first ministers were Richard Henderson, William Pitt, and John Undrell.

But we are anticipating. Reference has been made to the fact that Methodism was introduced into Brecon by Charles Wesley. The accomplished author of *Horæ Britannicæ* says that Charles Wesley and Harri Llwyd, the first Welsh lay preacher in con-

nection with the Wesleys, established the church in the town soon after John Wesley's first visit in 1756. This date, however, is not early enough, as we shall see when we come to deal with the history of the Watton Chapel.

We have now briefly traced the history of English Wesleyan Methodism in Wales from 1743, when the great evangelist stood in the Builth churchyard, to 1770; at that time the county was divided into three circuits, under the pastoral oversight of seven ministers.

One hundred and forty-five years have gone since Wesley's first visit to the county of Brecon. A comparison of English Wesleyan Methodism in 1743 and 1888 may be edifying.

	Chapels.	Value of.	Ministers.	Members.
1743.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
1888.	255	£269,066	78	13,421

CHAPTER IV.

WELSH WESLEYAN METHODISM, AND INTRODUCTION INTO BRECON.

"And so the Word had breath, and wrought
With human hands the creed of creeds,
In loveliness of perfect deeds,
More strong than all poetic thoughts."—TENNYSON.

A general review of Welsh Wesleyan Methodism seems to have so little direct connection with a historical sketch of Methodism in the Brecon Circuit, that many readers will doubtless consider this portion of the book superfluous. Closer examination will, however, rectify that error. The thought which gave existence to this brief narrative was, *the prominence of Brecon in the development of Wesleyan Methodism*, and Welsh Methodism owes its origin to the earnest pleading of Dr. Coke, and to the joint labours of Owen Davies, of Wrexham, and John Hughes, of Ship street, Brecon.

Brecon gave Welsh Wesleyan Methodism its first ordained Welsh-speaking minister, and to the small Breconshire village of Llangynidr belongs the honour of having erected the first Welsh Wesleyan Chapel in South Wales. Llangynidr formerly belonged to the Brecon Circuit.

Edward Jones, Bathafarn.

The story of the appointment of the learned Breconian, John Hughes, to the joint superintendency of Welsh Wesleyan Methodism is full of interest. English Methodism had been

exerting its beneficent influence in the Principality for nearly sixty years before any attempt was made to provide for the Welsh-speaking population. But the golden moment came.

Towards the close of the last century, a youth from the Vale of Clwyd went to reside in Manchester. During his sojourn there a gracious revival of the work of God broke out in Oldham Street Chapel. Edward Jones, of Bathafarn, attended a service conducted by the Rev. George Marsden.* God met him in that service,—memorable event in the spiritual life of the Principality! The ardent Welshman soon became a zealous Christian worker; he joined a band of prayer-leaders, the secretary of which was young Jabez Bunting, a man who became in after years the most influential minister in Methodism. In 1799 the two friends separated. Jabez Bunting entered the ministry and walked to Oldham, his first circuit; Edward Jones turned his face sorrowfully towards his home, Bathafarn.

1799, the touching point of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries!

Dr. Dixon, speaking of the year 1799, in the Memoir of the Rev. William E. Miller, strikingly observes:—"In the remarkable year of 1799, he came forth in this onerous, self-denying, and difficult work. We mention this as a remarkable year in the annals of our Body, because it pleased the GREAT HEAD of the Church to raise up and send forth at that period a number of eminent men. . . . Whether this was done to crown the Methodism of the last century with a peculiar glory as it retired, . . . or whether it was intended to lay a foundation for the prosperity and stability of the Work of God in the new century, it is difficult to say. However, the truth is, that 'the exceeding grace of God' has had this double effect."

Dr. Gregory, after quoting this paragraph in a review of *The Life of Jabez Bunting*, says: "Besides Jabez Bunting and Miller, there were sent out into the work that year, Robert Newton, William Leach, Daniel Isaac, Phillip Garrett, and Benjamin Gregory, all men of marked individuality."

True, these were "eminent men," but the learned reviewer omitted another eminent man. The memory of Edward Jones is as fragrant in Wales, and immortal in the history of Welsh Methodism, as that of the great Bunting is in universal Methodism. Edward Jones quitted not Oldham Street Chapel for the itinerancy, but He, who over-ruleth all, summoned him elsewhere, that, "through him, He might crown the Methodism of the last century with a peculiar glory as it retired, and lay a foundation for the prosperity and stability of His work in the new century," through establishing Welsh Wesleyan Methodism.

* George Marsden entered the ministry in 1793, and died in 1858. He was President of the Conference in 1821 and in 1831.

Welsh Missionaries.

To wrench himself from the hallowed companionship of Oldham Street Chapel and face the Vale of Clwyd, which had no Wesleyan Methodism, was, in truth, a severe trial to the youthful disciple. Prior to his departure, he, however, unburdened his heart to his pastor, the Rev. Samuel Bradburn,—the Demosthenes of Methodism—who was President of the Conference that year. Mr. Bradburn advised him to call upon the Chester ministers—Revs. Thomas Hutton and George Morley, and invite them to visit Ruthin. This he did, and they gladly consented. January 3rd, 1800, the promised visit was paid.

The Conference was held that year in the City Road Chapel, London. Several ministers had spoken of the work of God in Wales, but no action was taken. Stations of ministers for the ensuing year were confirmed, and Wales overlooked, when Dr. Coke, returning from Ireland, breathlessly entered the chapel. Years earlier the renowned missionary had cherished the hope of being able to form a mission to the Welsh of his native land, and the work of Edward Jones convinced him that the time to establish it had come. He addressed the Conference, and earnestly and eloquently pleaded for two missionaries for Wales. Conference assented, and the Revs. Owen Davies and John Hughes were designated for the work.

Great prosperity crowned their unremitting labours. The ministerial staff rapidly increased.* Churches were formed all over the country. Unquestionably, the Great Head of the Church, through the instrumentality of Edward Jones, Bathafarn, crowned the Methodism of the last century with a peculiar glory as it retired, and laid a foundation for the prosperity and stability of the work of God in the new century.

Welsh Wesleyan Methodism grew apace, and exerted an enormous influence in Cambria. Dr. Rees pays a high tribute to the zeal and success of the pioneers of the work. He says :— "There is not, perhaps, in the history of religion in any country, . . . any instance of such rapid success attending the labours of men, without anything extraordinary in their talents or position, as that which attended the labours of the founders of Wesleyan Methodism in the Principality. Having only begun their work in 1800, before the end of 1810 the travelling preachers were forty in number; the Societies which they had formed, four hundred; the members between five and six thousand; and they had built no less than eighty chapels in nine years." Another aspect of the beneficent influence of the Mission in Wales was the impetus it gave to religious literature. Attempts had been

* Edward Jones, Bathafarn, entered the ministry in 1802. He died at Leek, August 26th, 1837. "Bathafarn Memorial Chapel" in Ruthin is a noble tribute to his memory.

made in the eighteenth century to establish Welsh periodicals, but they all proved unsuccessful. Even the valuable magazine which Charles of Bala started in 1799 was discontinued in 1802. In 1809 the pioneer missionaries had the courage to start a monthly magazine, entitled *Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd*. Their enterprize succeeded, and the *Eurgrawn* continues to this day. About the same time they also began to publish a translation of Dr. Coke's Commentary on the Bible. This enterprising spirit and success moved other churches. Denominational magazines were started, with this result, that there are now twelve or fifteen religious periodicals published monthly in the Welsh language.

Welsh Methodism in Brecon.

In the year 1805, three out of the twenty-one Welsh ministers were appointed Missionaries to South Wales—John Hughes, Brecon, to Swansea; Edward Jones, Bathafarn, to Merthyr Tydvil; and Griffith Owen to Cardiff. Two years later, the Revs. Evan Edwards and William Batten visited Brecon, Talybont, Crickhowell, and Llangynidr, and established small societies in these places. In 1808, four new circuits were formed in Wales, among them Crickhowell and Llandilo. Brecon was comprised in the Crickhowell Circuit, and Devynnock in Llandilo Circuit.

Llangynidr Chapel.

To this little Breconshire village belongs the honour of having erected the first Welsh Wesleyan Chapel in South Wales. It was built in 1808, and opened in the same year by the Revs. Edward Jones (Bathafarn), William Davies (Africa), and an English minister.

Brecon Welsh Circuit was formed in 1810, and included Brecon and Devynnock and the surrounding villages. The ministers were: Owen Jones, Humphrey Jones, and John Jones.

This chapter has narrated the origin and progress of the Welsh Mission from the "upper room" at Ruthin, and the earnest pleading of Dr. Coke in 1800, to the year 1810, when Wales was divided into twenty circuits, under the pastoral care of forty-nine ministers.

Eighty-eight years have fled since our accomplished townsman, John Hughes, of Ship street, entered the Principality as a Welsh Missionary. Dr. Rees spoke of the unparalleled success of the early pioneers, and a review of the eighty-eight years' work and progress will be interesting.

Year.	Circuits.	Chapels.	Ministers.	Lay Preachers.	Members.
1800. ..	1 ...	Nil. ...	2 ...	Nil. ...	No information.
1888. ...	49 ...	344 ...	95 ...	269 ...	19,884

Value of Chapel Property, 1800 : One rented room.
1888 : £256,635, exclusive of rented chapels and mission rooms.

This progress is startling, but the most ardent Welsh Wesleyan must acknowledge that Welsh Wesleyan Methodism has not fulfilled its early promise. Satisfactory reasons could be adduced if necessary to account for the comparative failure. One thing, however, is beyond contradiction, viz., that it has and does exert a potent influence on the intellectual, moral, and religious life of the Principality. Its ministers rank among the noblest of the ambassadors of eternal truth in the country, and some of them occupy positions of peerless pre-eminence in the history of the Christian pulpit.

CHAPTER V.

AMALGAMATION OF ENGLISH AND WELSH CIRCUITS.

"Two are better far than one
For counsel or for fight."—WESLEY.

We have seen that the English Circuit was formed in 1770, and the Welsh circuit in 1810. From 1807 to 1824 the English and Welsh people in Brecon worshipped together in the Watton Chapel; but although they worshipped in the same sanctuary, they had separate interests and pastors. The Conference of 1814 thought it advisable to amalgamate the English and Welsh causes by withdrawing several ministers from the Welsh work and transferring the Churches to the care of bilingual ministers in the English Circuits. Five Circuits in South Wales were affected, among them Brecon, but the decree of Conference embittered the Brecon Methodists beyond measure. National sentiment predominated over common sense, and extreme measures were adopted. The stormy times of the amalgamation of 1814 present such a complete contrast to the peaceful solution of the question in 1885 as to deserve mentioning.

In 1813 Thomas C. Rushworth was the superintendent of the English Circuit, and Hugh Hughes of the Welsh Circuit. When Mr. Hughes returned from Conference he was informed that the chapel would be closed against him. Two of the trustees brought him a letter signed by Mr. G. (probably William Gilbert) and others, prohibiting him to enter the chapel to preach his farewell

sermon. Mr. Hughes replied, and stated that inasmuch as they refused him permission to preach, no other Methodist minister could preach there. This produced some terror among the trustees, but they were too obstinate to yield. Mr. Gilbert offered Mr. Hughes the use of his house for the services. When Mr. Rushworth returned it was announced that he would deliver a valedictory sermon in the chapel. Mr. Hughes explained to him the unconstitutional action of the trustees, and Mr. Rushworth declined to preach. The following Sunday, when David Rogers, the newly-appointed bilingual superintendent, went to the chapel, he found several of the trustees standing on the pulpit stairs to bar his entrance. He left and preached in the open air. Now the tide turned in his favour; his preaching was remarkably powerful, and his ministry outlived the antagonism of his opponents.

This union of English and Welsh Methodism lasted but one year.

The following year, 1816, five Circuits were amalgamated, and Brecon was again among the number. This arrangement remained in force for four years. After that no attempt was made until 1885, when the problem which puzzled and perplexed our forefathers was amicably solved by the amalgamation of the two circuits. Thus ends the chapter of amalgamation in Brecon, and it doubtless forms the preface of a bright history, yet to be written, of the deeds which, in the order of God's Providence, will characterize the happy union of English and Welsh Methodism in the Circuit.

CHAPTER VI.

THE OLD WATTON CHAPEL, BRECON.

A Group of Methodist Ark-Bearers.

We have seen that the learned author of *Horæ Britannicæ* opined that Charles Wesley and Harri Llwyd founded Methodism in Brecon shortly after Wesley's first visit in 1756. This date, however, is not early enough. A writer in Poole's *History of Brecknockshire* asserts that the Watton Chapel was built in 1770, wisely remarking, however, that "the date of erection and the circumstances surrounding are enveloped in the darkness of the past." Safe retreat in doubt! When, then, was Methodism planted in Brecon? When was its first sanctuary erected?

Unquestionably, some years earlier than the above dates, as we shall presently see. John Prickard, one of the early Methodist preachers,* writing of his youthful days in Brecon, says :—"The summer following, I lost a good friend, Mr. Howel Harris,"—Harris died July 21st, 1773—"the next winter I lost another great friend, the dearest to me of any man living, Mr. Watkins, of Llanusk. He had been a zealous preacher for *twenty years*, and enjoyed the love of God uninterruptedly for *four-and-twenty years*." Now, this extract will enable us to draw our own conclusion. John Watkins died on the 19th of January, 1774. His *twenty* years preaching life take us back to 1753-4, and if, as is most probable, he was converted under the ministry of Charles Wesley or some of the Methodist preachers, that event takes us back to 1750. Another fact that favours the earlier date is, Mrs. Watkins, afterwards Mrs. Williams, Bailie, joined the Wesleyan Church in 1753. Evidently, 1750 seems the most reliable conclusion. John Prickard's reminiscences furnish another incident which strongly supports 1750, viz., "In August, 1770, Lady Huntingdon proposed to Hugh Bold, Esquire, that the chapel in Brecon should be reserved for the use of her scholars, and whomsoever her ladyship should appoint, by means of which Mr Wesley's preachers were to be entirely excluded. But Mr. Bold refused to comply, and soon after settled the chapel on the Methodists. Lady Huntingdon had not given a shilling towards the building, but Mr. Wesley had subscribed *eighty pounds*. . . . The society had been raised and kept up for nearly twenty years by means of Mr. Wesley and his preachers." These extracts and references assign an earlier date than 1756. The most plausible conjecture is, that Charles Wesley, during his visits to Garth, came over to the town, and established the society in conjunction with Howel Harris.

Prior to the erection of the chapel, the Methodists met in the houses of William Gilbert and Thomas James. Ultimately, the time arrived to build a "house for the Ark of the Lord." William Gilbert generously gave a corner of his orchard, where Mr Wesley and his co-adjutors had been accustomed to preach in the open-air during the summer months. The chapel was erected on the corner of Free street and Little Free street, on the left hand side in going from Free street to the Watton. In addition to this munificent gift, he had subscribed £100, and Mr. J. Wesley £80. The trustees were : Abraham Prickard, Hugh Bold, Esquire ; Walter Williams, gentleman ; John Church, gentleman ; Charles Ashton, and William Gilbert.

The earliest adherents of Methodism in Brecon richly deserve more than a passing notice.

* See Chap. XIX.

Hugh Bold, Esquire,

was the first Methodist steward and treasurer in Brecon. He was an attorney, practising in the town, and Bailiff of Brecknock in 1773, 1783, 1791, and 1804. His Methodism was of the loftiest and purest type, and his wealth willingly devoted to its support. Mr Wesley entertained the highest opinion of him, as may be seen from a letter written by him to the Rev. Z. Yewdall, who was stationed in Swansea, and who, it appears, had some crucial business on hand; he says:—"You have now a fair prospect. It really seems as if God had inclined the hearts of the magistrates to do you justice. I know no attorney to be depended on like Mr. Bold, of Brecon."

This Mr. Bold was the father of Mr. Hugh Bold, who was Recorder of Brecknock, and who married Ann, the daughter of the Rev. Richard Davies, Vicar of Brecknock, and Canon of St. David's. The Rev. Hugh Bold, of Boughrood Castle, who was for many years Chairman of the Quarter Sessions, was the grandson of the venerable Canon of St. David's, and of Hugh Bold, Esquire, attorney, Methodism's first general steward in Brecon. The influence of the ecclesiastical grandsire was in the ascendant, and Methodism lost this noble family. How long?

Hugh Bold died on the 10th of February, 1809, in his seventy-eighth year, and was buried in the Priory Church.

John Church was one of the Methodist trustees and a society steward. Mr. Wesley was frequently entertained at his house. He purchased the Ffrwdgrech estate. Mr. Church died on the 16th of June, 1814. His son, Samuel Church, who built the present mansion of Ffrwdgrech, was, like his father, a liberal supporter of Methodism. William Church, John Church's younger brother, entered the Methodist ministry, and enjoyed the confidence of Mr. Wesley. The Rev. Henry L. Church, of Upper Norwood, is the grandson of the Rev. William Church.

Walter Williams, gentleman, of Bailie. For a biographical sketch of him, see Chapter xiii.

William Gilbert. Brecon Methodism had its first home in his house, and he offered willingly and generously for the erection of Methodism's first sanctuary in the town. He was buried in the Priory churchyard about the year 1784. There is an entry in the Circuit Book, under date August 30th, 1785, which reads thus:—"Received of Mr. Wm. Gilbert, £2 16s., being the balance after deducting £7 4s. due to him for hay and corn for the preachers' horses, with a note of hand for £10, making the £20 left by his father to the Brecon Circuit."

William Gilbert, junior, survived his father about thirty-two years. The Methodist influence of his home made itself known in his upright and exemplary Christian character. His father's people were his, and his father's God, his God. This good

and holy man died on the 21st of April, 1816, in his seventy third year. His epitaph reveals the man and the saint:—

"Reader,—He was a Christian, and from Christian principles loved mercy, did justice and walked humbly with his God. Go thou and do likewise."

The strife aroused by the Amalgamation in 1814, showed that he was a prince in our Israel. True, that incident was the outcome of indiscretion, but when he was convinced of the grievous blunder which they had made, he readily withdrew his opposition, and when the pride of the other trustees was too obstinate to submit, he invited Mr. Hughes to conduct the services in his house.

John Watkins, of Glanusk. This saintly man's name was mentioned before. For twenty years he conscientiously discharged the important duties of a class leader and a local preacher. John Prickard, writing of his own conversion in 1768, says:—"At night that dear Servant of God, Mr. Watkins, of Glan Usk, met the class, and oh, how did his soul rejoice when he heard that another was born into his Father's kingdom! He conceived a great affection for me that night, which he retained to the day of his death. . . . When I took my last farewell of him, he said, with tears flowing from his eyes, 'O, my dear John, the enemy strives to have my life, but it is hid with Christ in God.' He died soon after in full triumph of faith. I may safely say that he did not leave his fellow behind him, in all that country, for deep piety, Christian experience, zeal for God, and true benevolence."

Noble testimony!

He died January 19th, 1744, in his fifty-seventh year. A Welsh poet wrote these lines in memory of him:—

Nid Sion Watkins mwy ei enw,
Ond enaid gloew, glan, diglwyf;
Ca'dd roi hcibio ei dy daearol,
A'i lanw'n llawn a'r nefol nwyf,
Darfu bywyd, darfu llafur,
Darfu 'i wenwyn, darfu 'i boen,
Ca'dd ymadael a'r carcharau,
Ar hyfryd foreu i freichiau'r Oen.

The remains of this good man were interred at Llanfrynach churchyard; and the following epitaph, which is richer in sentiment than elegant in diction, speaks of John Watkins's saintly life:—

"Hwn oedd wr ffyffdlawn, purlan, parchus,
Yn rhodio'r ffordd i'r nef yn addas.
O ceised pawb ohonom ninnau
Wasnaethu Duw trwy fyw fel yntau."

Who would desire the memory of a man so ennobled by the grace of God to perish,—a member of heaven's peerage, before which earthly distinctions fade away?

May Brecon Methodism never lack true successors of John Watkins, of Glanusk!

Another name of interest is that of Walter Churchey. Tyerman says:—"Walter Churchey was an enthusiastic Welshman; a lawyer, with a large family and a slender purse; a good, earnest, conceited old Methodist, who, unfortunately for his wife and children, had more delight in writing poetry than he had employment in preparing briefs. He was one of Wesley's correspondents as early as 1771; exchanged letters with Charles Wesley; was an acquaintance of the saintly Fletcher, and an intimate friend of Joseph Benson and Dr. Coke. He claimed the honour, which belonged to others,* of having first suggested to Wesley the publishing of the *Arminian Magazine*. . . . He was a good man, though, perhaps, too imaginative; very diligent, but very poor; a warm admirer of Methodist doctrine, but withal a millenarian."† Churchey resided for some time at Little Ffordd Fawr, a house on the roadside about midway between Glasbury and Hay. He died in Brecon in December, 1806, and was buried at the Priory.

His son, Walter Churchey was for many years Town Clerk of Brecon.

Of another earnest and devoted Brecon Methodist, Dr. Powell, there are no materials for a sketch, but the Great Evangelist writing to Churchey, says:—"I am glad to hear that Dr. Powell continues in the good way. He seems to be of a frank open temper, and to be skilful in his profession."

These were some of the first-fruits of the great Revival in Brecon. Other names appear often in the old records, such as Thomas James, Abraham Prickard, Robert Phillips, and Edward Prosser (a man whose appearance strikingly resembled Mr. Wesley), but of these and other Methodist worthies no reliable information can be obtained. Their devotion, piety, zeal, and deeds are recorded in the Book of Life, "Yea, of Zion it shall be said, this one and that one was born in her, and the Most High himself shall establish her; the Lord shall count, when he writeth up the peoples, This one was born there."

For twenty years Calvinistic and Arminian Methodists worshipped together at Brecon, but

The Great Controversy of 1770

divided the Church.

Lady Huntingdon strove to persuade Mr. Bold to reserve the chapel for the use of her own students. Mr. Bold promptly and resolutely declined to do so. The consequence was that the adherents of Whitfield and the Countess left the chapel, and

* This assertion, however, is no proof.

† See Benson's letter, Chap. XX.

worshipped for some time at Watergate, in the house of Richard Watkins, situated right opposite Watergate Chapel. Very soon after the Separation her ladyship built the Struet Chapel, at the bottom of King street.

The Watton Chapel was rebuilt in the year 1815. Nine years later the Tabernacle Chapel was opened in the Struet, whither the Welsh Wesleyans migrated. Another nine years elapsed, and Methodism's first sanctuary in the town was replaced by the more commodious chapel in Lion street.

What became of the old chapel? For four years it was used as a day-school by a Mr. Thompson, and then sold to William Jeffreys for £170, who converted it into three cottages and a cooperage!

Eighty-five years rested the Ark of the Lord in the Old Watton Chapel.

Eighty-five years! During those years a grand succession of saintly men ministered before the Lord there. Let us tarry a moment longer amid the hallowed and inspiring associations of the Old Sanctuary. What a host of mighty men preached the Gospel there. Men whose names are imperishable! Giants of the great Revival! Some of the most illustrious ambassadors of God. Howel Harris, the pioneer of Methodist open-air preaching. Whitfield, the Baptist of Methodism; Charles Wesley, the immortal poet of the Revival; Dr. Coke, the greatest missionary of Christendom; Fletcher, the saintly theologian of Methodism; Benson, the learned commentator; Alexander Mather, Methodism's Second President after the death of the venerable Wesley; Joseph Bradford, Wesley's faithful companion and friend, a twice elected President; Thomas Taylor, the earnest Yorkshireman, Methodism's pioneer missionary in Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, in recognition of whose heroic labours and indomitable zeal the Conference conferred its highest honour upon him; James Wood, another twice-elected President; Harri Llwyd, Methodism's first Welsh lay preacher, the forerunner of a noble band of Christian workers; Richard Whatcoat, the third Protestant Bishop of the New World; Samuel Warren, the agitator of Methodism; James Dixon, another President; John Hughes, the learned Breconian; Daniel J. Draper, the hero of the *London* shipwreck; and John Wesley himself, whose only peers in the Church of God are Paul and Martin Luther.

Three generations of Christians worshipped in that sacred edifice. The "Elect Lady," her daughters and guests; the godly magistrate of Garth; the affluent Church family; the trustworthy attorney, Hugh Bold; the honoured Williamses of Bailie; the generous Gilberts, of the Watton; the peerless class leader of Glanusk; the beloved physician, Dr. Powell; the quaint versifier, Churchey; and many more, whose names are forgotten on earth, but recorded in heaven.

Persecution.—The Brecon Grand Jury's Presentment.

Methodism's Great Pioneers were not gladly welcomed in England and Wales. "Beautiful upon the mountains" were the feet of these harbingers of salvation, but prejudice, bigotry, and sin blinded the vision of priests, magistrates, and people, and the "despised Methodists" were subjected to the persecution of priests, the tyranny of magistrates, and the lawlessness of infuriated mobs. Brecon's record in this respect is not an enviable one. Howel Harris was denounced by the several clergymen as a deceiver of the people. Marmaduke Gwynne went to hear him, with the Riot Act in his pocket, intending to commit him as an incendiary in Church and State; and when the mighty Whitfield assayed to preach on the Bulwark, the rabble completely silenced him. Batten and others were pelted and mobbed at Devynnock. The solitary evangelist was maltreated on the village green at Glasbury; and dauntless William Seward was enrolled among "the noble army of martyrs" while preaching on the Black Lion Green at Hay. But these things moved not the indomitable Methodists. God raised up giants for a gigantic work, and Methodism lives.

In the year 1774, the Grand Jury at the Brecon Assizes fondly thought, that inasmuch as the efforts of priests, magistrates, and the rabble had failed to crush Methodism, THEY might succeed! Accordingly, they deemed it their duty to make a presentment to the presiding judge, to the following effect:—"That the Methodists held illegal meetings; that their preachers pretended to expound the Scriptures by virtue of inspiration; that by this means they collected together great numbers of disorderly persons, very much endangering the peace of our Sovereign Lord the King; and that, unless their proceedings were timely suppressed, they might endanger the peace of the kingdom in general. At all events, the pretended preachers or teachers, at their irregular meetings, by their enthusiastic doctrines, very much confounded and disordered the minds of his Majesty's good subjects, and this in time might lead to the overthrowing of our good government both in Church and State. Finally, the judge is requested, if the authority of the present court was not sufficient for the purpose, to apply to some superior authority in order to put an end to the villianous schemes of such dangerous assemblies."

Whether the "presiding judge" applied to "some superior authority" or not, we know not; but this we do know, that the "dangerous assemblies" frequently appealed to a "Superior Authority," and vulgar mobs, furious priests, lampooning pamphleteers, unjust magistrates, and grand juries failed "to put an end to the villainous schemes." Seventeen years later we stand at the death-bed of John Wesley, "the ringleader of these

dangerous assembles and their villainous schemes." What an inspiring sight. "Seeing that those around him were at a loss to understand what he tried to say, the grand old Christian gladiator paused, and summoning for a final effort all the little strength he had remaining, he exclaimed, in a tone well-nigh supernatural, 'The best of all is, God is with us!'. . . . He died about ten o'clock, a.m., on Wednesday, March 2nd, 1791. . . . And then they knelt down and prayed that the mantle of the ascended Elijah might rest upon his followers."—(Tyerman).

One hundred and fourteen years have passed since the Grand Jury of Brecon tried to suppress the dangerous assemblies. The failure or success of their presentment may be seen, if we bear in mind that to-day twenty-five million Methodists reiterate the dying words of John Wesley—"The best of all is, God is with us!"

CHAPTER VII.

LION STREET CHAPEL, BRECON, AND DR. COKE MEMORIAL SCHOOLS.

This Chapel was erected in 1835, on a piece of land purchased from Penry Williams, Esq., for £200. September 27th and October 4th of that year it was dedicated for divine worship. In the November number of the *Methodist Magazine* the following account of the opening services appeared :—

"A beautiful new Wesleyan Chapel has been opened for divine service in the town of Brecon, which will contain about four hundred persons. The services were as follows :—On Sunday morning, September 27th, the Rev. John Hughes, author of "Horæ Britannicæ," and the Rev. David Williams, of Llandilo, preached; and in the afternoon and evening, the Rev. John Scott,* of Bristol. The collections amounted to £75. On the following Sabbath the services were continued, when the Revs. John Hughes and David Morgan preached in the morning, and the Rev. William Atherton,† of Bath, in the afternoon and evening. The collections nearly equalled those of the preceding Sabbath. There were services on the following day (Monday),

* President of the Conference in 1843 and in 1852.
† President of the Conference in 1846. Sir William Atherton, Solicitor General in Lord Palmerston's Ministry in 1859, was his son.

when the Revs. J. Hughes and D. Morgan again preached in the morning, and Mr. Atherton in the evening. These services were numerously attended, a gracious feeling pervaded the whole of the congregations, and the very liberal sum of £155 was collected. The chapel is situated in a very eligible and delightful part of the town; the whole of the pews, with two or three exceptions, are already let; and we doubt not, from present appearances, that great good will result from the erection. . . . It was the anxious wish of the Venerable Dr. Coke to see a handsome chapel erected in his native town: and now, twenty-one years after his decease, his desire is fulfilled. The new chapel is situated near the spot where the Doctor was born and brought up, and it is supposed that the whole erection will cost £2000, including two convenient class-rooms. After all our exertions, we fear a debt of £1200 will remain on the premises." This debt was liquidated in the year 1867, through the laudable and strenuous exertions of the Rev. Edwin Thorley, Mr. William J. Roberts, Chapel Steward, and other friends.

In 1880 the chapel was re-seated, cemented, and thoroughly renovated at a cost of £280. £100 remained unpaid until the summer of 1887, when the debt was cleared off.

Jubilee Commemoration.

In October, 1885, the Jubilee of the opening of the chapel was celebrated. We quote a few extracts from a report which appeared in the *Brecon County Times* of the services:—

"Fifty years ago the English Wesleyan Chapel, Lion street, was erected, and on Wednesday week the Jubilee was celebrated by a social tea-party and a public meeting. It is a singular fact that in the very month which witnessed the completion of the fifty years existence of the chapel, the English and Welsh Societies of the Brecon Circuit were formally amalgamated. . . . . The jubilee meetings were also utilised for the purpose of welcoming the Rev. T. Wynne-Jones, the superintendent minister, and Mr. Denny, the lay agent. . . . . Dr. Coke's memorial school was filled with a large number of friends, and through the generosity of Mr. Alderman Rich, the senior Circuit steward, a free tea was provided. After tea an adjournment was made to the chapel, and a most enjoyable meeting, which will be long memorable to those who were present, was held. Addresses were delivered by Messrs. Rich, James Thomas, O. P. Larkin, A. Walters, T. Wootton, D. J. Thomas, W. Denny, and the Rev. T. Wynne-Jones."

Memorial Tablets.

Several beautiful Memorials of the Dead adorn the chapel. Conspicuous among them is a very handsome tablet, erected in

memory of Dr. Coke, by missionaries and ministers. Originally it was placed in the Havard or Vicar's chapel in the Priory church, where the missionary's parents and wife were buried. During some renovations in the Vicar's chapel the tablet was removed to Lion street, and the one now in the Priory church is a copy of it.

Upon this splendid monument the sculptor's art has portrayed a striking scene—a missionary ship under full sail, bound for the land of the "setting sun."

The monument* bears the following inscription:—

Sacred to the Memory of

THE REV. THOMAS COKE, LL.D.,

Of Jesus College, Oxford, who was born in this Borough the 9th day of September, A.D. 1747. Was one of the Common Council, and in 1770 filled the office of Chief Magistrate with honour to himself and equal benefit to the public. After a zealous ministry of several years in the Established Church, in 1776 he united himself to the Rev. John Wesley, M.A., and preached the Gospel with success in various parts of Great Britain and Ireland. To him were confided the Foreign Missions of the Methodists, in support of which he expended a large part of his fortune, and with unremitting vigour encountered toils and self-denial, which the Christian world beheld with admiration. By the Blessing of God on the Missions to the Negroes in the West Indies, commenced by him 1786, a foundation was laid for the civilization and salvation of that degraded class of human beings. To the Negro race upon their native continent, as well as in the islands of their bondage, his compassions were extended, and he set the first example in modern days of efforts for the spiritual emancipation of Western Africa. After crossing the Atlantic eighteen times on his visits to the American Continent and the West Indian Colonies in the service of the souls of men, his unwearied spirit was stirred within him to take a part in the noble enterprize of evangelizing British Columbia. He sailed in 1813 as the leader of the first Wesleyan Missionaries to Ceylon. But this "burning and shining light," which in the Western World had guided thousands into the paths of peace, had now fulfilled its course, and suddenly, yet rich in evening splendour, sunk into the shadows of mortality. He died on the voyage the 3rd of May, 1814, and his remains were committed to the great deep until the sea shall give up her dead. His days were past, but his purposes were not broken off, for the Mission which he had planned was made abundantly to prosper. The same love of Christ which made him long the advocate and the pattern of exertions in behalf of foreign lands, constrained him also to works of pious charity at home. Into many neglected districts of England, Wales, and Ireland, the means of grace were carried by his private bounty or through his public influence, and his praise is in the Gospel throughout all the churches. This monument was erected A.D. 1829, at the expense of the ministers and missionaries with whom he was united, as a record of their respectful gratitude for the disinterested services, the eminent usefulness, and the long, tried, and faithful attachment of their now glorified friend, by the appointment and under the direction of the Rev. T. Roberts, M.A., and the Rev. J. Buckley.

The monument also bears on either side records of the first and second wives of the great missionary—Penelope Goulding, the daughter of Joseph Smith, Esq., of Bradford; and Anne, daughter of Joseph Loxdale, Esq., of Shrewsbury.

* Designed and executed by John Evan Thomas, F.S.A. (See next page.)

Another of the tablets was erected by Dr. Coke in memory of his father, Bartholomew Coke, the benevolent, hospitable, and respected apothecary and chief magistrate, and of his mother, Anne Coke.

The chapel contains also tastefully executed tablets to the memory of the following :—

The Rev. Fletcher Menhinick. (See Chap. XVII.)

Eliza Gaylor Rich (wife of Alderman Rich), and her four children.

Thomas Watkins, Struet, and a son, daughter, and granddaughter.

John Thomas, Berkeley Place, and his first and second wives.

The two last named gentlemen occupied prominent positions in the Church, and their memory is greatly revered. Three of J. Thomas's sons became distinguished men, viz., John Evan Thomas, F.S.A., the renowned sculptor; W. Meredyth Thomas, R.A., London; and James Lewis Thomas, F.S.A., F.R.G.S., Chief Surveyor to the War Office, who designed the far-famed Netley Hospital. Of these three illustrious men, the sculptor unquestionably merits preeminence. Several of the exquisitely designed monuments in the Priory Church were executed by him, also the Wellington monument on the Bulwark, which he presented to his native town. In 1862 he was appointed J.P. and D.L. of Brecknockshire, and High Sheriff in 1868. For a fuller sketch of Mr. Thomas, see Poole's *History of Brecknockshire*, pp. 322-3.

Thus three boys who received their early religious training in the Watton Chapel reached positions of great honour.

The Chapel contains several other tributes of affection :—

A very elegant Pulpit Bible and Hymn-book were presented by Mr. Thomas Lloyd, of Liverpool, in memory of his venerable father, the Rev. John Lloyd, who for forty years rendered valuable service to Welsh Methodism. Mr. Lloyd died in Liverpool in September, 1869. His last audible words were, "Happy, happy Sabbath."

The late Mrs. David Jones, of Cavendish House, Brecon, gave a beautiful Communion Service in memory of her father, the Rev. Thomas Webb. Mr. Webb entered the ministry in 1815, and died in 1867. He travelled in Brecon in 1855-6-7. The Rev. James R. Webb, who died in Radnor Street Circuit, Manchester, in 1877, and Samuel Webb, Q.C., an eminent Irish lawyer, who occupied a prominent position in the trial of the Irish Invincibles, who were convicted of the murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke in Phœnix Park, were two of Mr. Webb's sons.

The inscription on the handsome baptismal font will tell its own affecting record :—"In loving memory of Eliza Gaylor Rich, who was taken Home, 29th December, 1880. Presented to the

Wesleyan Church by H. C. Rich, Esq., J.P., May 23rd, 1881."

The Commandments, which have been painted on two panels, one each side of the pulpit, were the gift of Mr. Jabez J. Pryce, of Liverpool, in memory of his saintly father, the late Mr. John Pryce, who was for many years a remarkably successful class leader, a "man, mighty in the Scriptures" and in prayer.

Organ.

For many years the organ and choir had been located in the gallery, where the service of song received valuable aid from the late Mr. W. J. Roberts and Mr. Jabez Jenkinson, choirmasters, and Miss Rich, who was organist for many years. In 1872 the old organ, which had been erected in 1850, was disposed of, and a new one supplied by Mr. Maley, of London, at a cost of £130. The necessary funds were raised by a committee, of which the Rev. Henry Lewis, superintendent minister, was chairman, Mr James Thomas, treasurer, and the late Mr. W. M. Thomas, hon. secretary. The death of Mr. W. M. Thomas before the completion of the undertaking, resulted in his place being occupied by his brother, Mr. D. J. Thomas.

Dr. Coke Memorial Schools.

The happy thought of honouring the memory of the great missionary by erecting these schools owes its inception to the Rev. Edwin Thorley. Brecon admired the illustrious Doctor, revered his memory, and boasted of his heroic deeds. Was he not born in the town, and educated in Christ College? And did he not at the early age of twenty-three fill the office of Chief Magistrate of the borough? And did not his connection with Brecon shed lustre and glory on the ancient town? True, and yet no attempt had been made to perpetuate the name and to commemorate the world-famed work of this eminent Breconian.

Mr. Thorley conceived a happy idea, but it seemed altogether impracticable. Lion Street Chapel was heavily burdened with a debt, and to think of providing the requisite means for erecting costly Memorial Schools and carrying on the work seemed utterly impossible. The brave and good man had carefully counted the cost, and formidable opposition was not allowed to thwart his purpose. When fearful ones endeavoured to dissuade him, on account of the existing liabilities of the trustees, his reply was, that he proposed to incorporate with the project a scheme for the extinction of the debt, so that, free from that burden, the Methodists of Brecon might unhindered carry on the benevolent enterprise.

Half-a-dozen friends met in his house in January, 1867, he explained the scheme, and they entered into it with such hearti-

ness and enthusiasm, that in a short time nearly three hundred pounds were promised. Enthusiasm is contagious. Soon the sum was augmented to four hundred and fifty pounds. The case was represented to the Committee of the Wesleyan Foreign Missionary Society, and a promise of a grant of one hundred pounds obtained, on condition that a tablet bearing the name of Dr. Coke should be placed in the schools, and that the building should be free of debt. Mr. Thorley agreed, and for some time traversed the country soliciting aid from the admirers of the noble missionary. Promises of help and liberal donations flowed in. Ultimately, a portion of the George Hotel garden was acquired for £16 15s. Plans were prepared by Mr Hancorn, of Newport, and the contract given to Mr. Thomas Price, builder.

On a fine autumnal day, a large number of persons assembled to witness the ceremony of fixing the memorial tablet. The stone, which is of marble, bears the following inscription in black lettering:—"Dr. Coke Memorial Schools. This memorial stone was fixed October 9th, 1867, by John Robinson Kay, Esq. 'And they glorified God in me'" (Gal. i. 24).

After this had been completed, subscriptions (including one hundred guineas from Mr. Kay) to the amount of two hundred and fifty pounds were placed in a silver basket. In the evening a public meeting was held, presided over by Mr. Kay, and addressed by the Revs. John Scott, D.D., of Westminster Training College, E. Thorley, James Pearce, and Mr. Window, of Exeter.

This was an eventful day in Brecon, and Mr. Kay suggested that each member of the Common Council of the borough should be presented with a handsomely-bound volume of Dr. Etheridge's Life of Dr. Coke. This was done, and the following inscription, in gold letters on black morroco, was inserted in each volume:—

"This Memoir of the Rev. Thomas Coke, D.C.L., formerly member of the Town Council of the Borough of Brecon, Chief Bailiff, and Justice of the Peace, is presented to ————, Member of the Common Council of the Borough of Brecon, by the building committee of the Dr. Coke Memorial Sunday and Day Schools, at the suggestion of John Robinson Kay, Esq., J.P., of Walmersley House, Lancashire, who fixed the Memorial Stone, October 9th, 1867.—Edwin Thorley, Minister."

Three months, later, January 6th, 1868, the Schools were opened, under the head-mastership of Mr. Jabez Jenkinson. Eighty-two scholars were admitted on that day, the first name entered on the register being "Thomas Hadley Watkins." For twenty years the schools have been successfully conducted, and at the present time, under the able tuition of Mr. and Mrs. Fisher, they are acknowledged to be first class elementary schools. The number of scholars on the registers is three hundred and twenty, and the average attendance exceeds two hundred and fifty. More than two thousand five hundred children have

passed through the schools. In 1881 it became necessary to provide additional accommodation.

Next to the strenuous efforts of Mr. Thorley, the indefatigable labours of the late Mr. W. J. Roberts, the secretary of the schools from the commencement to the time of his death, and the valuable assistance and counsel of Mr. J. E. Nott, who acted as treasurer from 1867 to 1886, deserve special mention.

The schools form an appropriate tribute to the memory of the most distinguished of the many eminent sons of Brecon.

Possibly out of these Memorial Schools many will arise and devote themselves to the great work to which Dr. Coke dedicated his ample fortune, his brilliant talents, and his noble life.

CHAPTER VIII.

LLANFAES CHAPEL, BRECON.

This Chapel is situated in Walnut Square, at the west end of the town, and was until September, 1885, the head of the Welsh Circuit. In August, 1871, the Welsh Church, after worshipping for forty-seven years in the Old Tabernacle in the Struet, migrated to the New Tabernacle. Up to the year 1824 English and Welsh Methodists worshipped in the Watton Chapel. Separation was then deemed advisable. Whether this separation permanently profited our Church in Brecon or not, is an open question. Our Welsh fathers, were, doubtless, anticipating great things when they inaugurated the new departure. Enthusiasm they possessed, business abilities they seriously lacked, and if a chapter of misfortune indicated evil omen, they were not unwarned.

Old Tabernacle Troubles.

Writing of his life in 1831, the Rev. Hugh Hughes says :— "Almost my first business in the Circuit was to raise funds for the Brecon Chapel. Pecuniary embarrasment perplexed the Trustees. At the outset they committed a serious blunder. £300 had been paid for the site for the Chapel and minister's house. The site and two cottages had previously been offered them for the same amount. This sum was considered exorbitant. Another purchaser was found, and, ultimately, the Trustees gave him three hundred pounds for the site, minus the cottages. Further,

during the erection, several slight alterations and improvements were ordered; the Contractor charged eight pounds for the extras. The claim was disputed, a lawyer consulted, and litigation ensued, which ultimately cost the Trustees eighty pounds. In 1831, permission was requested to appeal for assistance throughout South Wales. The District Meeting generously and readily granted it, and Mr Methusaleh Thomas rendered me very valuable assistance. Two hundred pounds were collected, the Chapel Fund Committee gave us a grant of one hundred pounds, and the debt was reduced to three hundred pounds."

The Chapel was opened on Tuesday and Wednesday, August 24th and 25th, 1824. The officiating ministers were:—The Rev. D. Morgan, who preached the first sermon from Psalm xxxiv. 2; Richard Bonner, E. Anwyl, Owen Rees, J. Davies, J. Oliver, and J. Williams. On Wednesday afternoon and evening, the services were held in the Town Hall, the spacious edifice being crowded to overflowing. Fair and promising were the prospects, but the incubus of the early blunders hampered the Church for half a century.

Sacred associations cluster around the Old Tabernacle. Many of the great preachers of Wales delivered their message there. There the Legates of the skies stirred to glorious war

"The Sacramental Host of God's Elect."

In 1870 the Trustees resolved to dispose of the property, and to erect a new chapel in Llanfaes. It was purchased by Mr. James for six hundred pounds, and converted into business premises.

With the sum realized the balance of the original debt was liquidated, fifty pounds paid to Mr. Morgan James, Devynnock, for the site in Walnut Square, and the balance was spent on the present Chapel, the foundation stone of which was laid in 1870.

A Forgotten Baptist Chapel.

During the interval between the sale of the Old Tabernacle and the opening of the new Chapel, the Welsh Church worshipped for a few months in a disused Baptist Chapel, which was situated in Newmarch street, just opposite the end of Saint David's street. Many years ago a misunderstanding disturbed the peace of the Watergate Baptist Church. The rebellious faction caused a rupture, withdrew from Watergate, and erected the Chapel in "Heol Hwnt" (Newmarch street). Time healed their dissensions; gradually they returned to Watergate, and the abandoned Chapel became the temporary home of Welsh Methodism in Brecon.

The ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the new Chapel took place in March, 1871, and a silver trowel bearing

the following record was presented by the Trustees:—"Presented to H. C. Rich, Esq., Mayor of Brecon, upon the occasion of laying the foundation stone of the Welsh Wesleyan Chapel, Llanvaes, March 11th, 1871."

The Chapel was erected by Mr. T. Price, the Watton, from plans prepared by Mr. John Williams, Llanvaes. It was dedicated for divine worship on Wednesday and Thursday, August 23rd and 24th, 1871. On Wednesday evening the Rev. Henry Parry and Mr. David Davies, Pant, Aberdare, officiated; and on Thursday, the Revs. Owen Owen, Isaac Jenkins, and H. Parry.

Legacy.

Rees Watkins, of Market street, who for many years loyally and liberally supported the cause, bequeathed a small legacy for the support of the ministry. The money is invested in the Brecon Gas Works.

Many doubted the wisdom of disposing of the Struet Chapel, its central position was deemed admirable, and Llanfaes considered too much out of the way. But it now appears to have been a far-seeing policy. "Moved by a wisdom not their own," this spot was selected, and it does seem that the Great Head of the Church moved fourteen years before men in the matter of amalgamation. Two spacious chapels in close proximity, in the centre of the town, would have been inconveniently near, and, doubtless, under the new regime and altered circumstances, prejudicial to each other's interests; but by leading the Trustees to erect their Tabernacle in Llanfaes, HE safe-guarded the interests of the Lion Street Church, and provided ample opportunities for aggressive work.

Prior to the amalgamation in 1885, the cause at Llanfaes was in a very languishing condition. The Sunday school had collapsed, the congregations were gradually but certainly diminishing, and the inevitable results followed—apathy and indifference. The new departure ushered in a period of prosperity. Under the indefatigable superintendency of Mr. Fisher, headmaster of Dr. Coke Schools, assisted by a number of willing workers, the Sunday school was resuscitated; the congregations have greatly increased, and vigorous Temperance work is being prosecuted there with gratifying success.

CHAPTER IX.

HAY CHAPEL.

"Flung to the heedless winds,
Or on the waters cast,
The Martyr's ashes, watched,
Shall gathered be at last."—LUTHER.

HAY, the second station in the circuit, is a pretty town, fifteen miles from Brecon, on the banks of the Wye.

The early history of this Church is wrapt in no little obscurity. That Methodist itinerants visited the town at a very early date is certain. Hay would unquestionably possess a peculiar attraction for those indefatigable and indomitable messengers of truth. Had not Methodism's first martyr fallen there? Would not a pilgrimage to the scene of his triumphant death re-invigorate their zeal, and assure them that the martyrs' God would never leave nor forsake them? Moreover, the picturesque little Wye-side town lay on the direct route from England to Trevecca.

Efforts have been made to ascertain the date of the erection of the old chapel in the Brecon road, but without success. When Wesley paid his first visit in August, 1771, he "preached in the new, neat preaching-house, to many more than it would contain." Many plausible suggestions concerning the introduction of Methodism to Hay commend themselves, such as Howel Harris's irregularities,—the eminent pioneer-itinerant, doubtless, preached there; Seward's visit and martyrdom. Stephen's martyrdom gave Christianity its greatest apostle, and Seward's blood became the seed of the Church at Hay, or, perhaps, it was the result of Wesley's sermon at Clyro in August, 1747. Feasible suppositions.

Clyro.—Eynon Bynon.

"Mr. J.'s" cowardice was not shared by all in Clyro. Eynon Bynon, Esq.,* early championed Methodism; he endured hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Once, when the good man stood up in Painscastle to preach, a violent crowd strove to prevent him, but he braved the opposition, and although the lawless rabble stoned him, yet was he not silenced. For many years he "showed himself approved unto God, a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Divine services were held at Pentwyn, and on one occasion an unexpected, but a most welcomed guest entered the house,—the saintly

* The grandfather of Miss Bynon, Pentwyn, Clyro.

Fletcher. He was riding in the neighbourhood, and in assaying to return to Trevecca missed his way. Giving rein to the horse, the faithful steed brought him to Mr. Bynon's house just when that good man was commencing a service. To the delight and profit of all, the great theologian expounded the Word of God.

But, to return to Hay, two or three interesting Methodist events occurred here. The most familiar, doubtless, is that of

Seward's Martyrdom.

Tyerman says that Methodism's first martyr was "a man of considerable property, but of meagre education and inferior talents. Whitfield's travelling companion in his second voyage to Georgia, who, at the time of his being murdered in Wales, was travelling with Howel Harris in Glamorganshire. . . . At length, on reaching Hay, a villain hit him on the head. The blow was fatal, and William Seward departed to inherit a martyr's crown, at the early age of thirty-eight, on October 22nd, 1741."

Harris and Seward Mobbed.

The eminent biographer errs a little in his account of Seward. Howel Harris's autobiography states that he met Seward at Cowbridge in the summer of 1740. Together they itinerated to Monmouthshire. At Newport, Usk, Carleon, and Monmouth, "Satan," says Harris, "was permitted to rage against us in a most horrible manner." At Newport the mob tore Harris's coat to tatters, stole his wig, and pelted him and his companion with apples, stones, and dirt "in the utmost rage." At Caerleon rotten eggs were thrown in all directions. "Brother Seward prayed and discoursed sweetly," presently he "had a furious blow on the right eye, which caused him much anguish, and, as it affected his left, he was obliged to be led by the hand blindfold for some days, till at last he became totally blind of it." Brave man! Will he now cease from his labours? Let subsequent events answer. From Caerleon they proceeded to Monmouth. "It happened to be the horse-race there, and both high and low were assembled against us." Mounting a table opposite the Town Hall, where a grand race-dinner was given, the dauntless evangelists delivered their message. "The Duke of B—— and Lord N—— ordered a drum to be beaten by our sides." Encouraged by the aristocracy, the rabble became furious. "During this storm Brother Seward was much afraid of hurt, yet he endured it with much calmness of spirit, saying, "Better endure this than hell."

Well might the brave soldier tremble! Fresh from a terrible conflict at Caerleon, and bearing on his body the marks of the Lord Jesus, is it to be wondered at?

Two years later, William Seward was passing through the town of Hay from Badsey, in Worcestershire, probably making his way to Trevecca. The town was noted for its wickedness, and for the great spiritual darkness of the people. Compassioning their ignorance, he resolved to tell them of the "Light of the World."

At one end of the town is an open plain or "green." It now bears the name of Black Lion Green. Above is a portion of the old town wall, and below runs the little brook which divides the counties of Hereford and Brecon. There the man of God stood. For awhile he was listened to in silence by the wondering people; presently the most reprobate among the inhabitants, raising a disturbance, began rudely to assault the preacher. Stones were cast at him, and several among the bystanders injured. One cowardly ruffian, standing behind the preacher, hit him with a huge stone, and Seward fell senseless to the ground. With his dying breath he prayed for his murderer, earnestly entreating that no efforts should be made to punish him. "And when he had said this, he fell asleep."

The Murderer's Death.

The man who hurled the fatal missile was well known and lived for many years. He had space given him to repent, for it appears that he died an old man. But he lived and died unchanged, and his death-bed was attended with peculiar horrors. In his last moments he was visited by one of the Methodists of Hay. Describing the scene, she said, "The room seemed full of devils." Thus died the murderer of Seward, Methodism's proto-martyr.*

The Martyr's Grave.

Beneath a giant yew tree, in Cusop churchyard, about a mile from Hay, the remains of the good man were interred, and the spot is known as *The Martyr's Grave.* A well-worn stone tells the story of his life and death:

Here lyeth the body of WILLIAM SEWARD,

of Badsey, in the County of Worcester, Gent., who departed ys life Octr ye 22d, 1742. Aged 38. To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.—Phillippians, chap. ye 1st, ver. ye 21st.

If Earth be all.
Why ore and ore a beaten Path,
You walk and draw up nothing new.
Not so our martyred Seraph did
When from the Verge of Wales he fled.

* I. E. Page, in "Christian Miscellany," April, 1863. Richard Lewis, Mr. Page's informant, was the son of the one who witnessed the ruffian's death, and father of Mrs. Walker and Mrs. Anwyl, of Hay.

Williams, Pantycelyn.

Few Methodists are aware of the fact, that the genius of the Welsh Poet of the Revival was brought to the Altar of God at Hay.

Howel Harris was accustomed to attend the morning service on the Lord's Day at Talgarth Church. Burning with holy fire, the youthful apostle would mount a tombstone or the churchyard wall to address the dispersing congregation. Curiosity led many thither. On one occasion, there stood among the audience a young medical student from Carmarthenshire, who was at that time pursuing his studies at Hay. God's Word pierced his heart. God's voice summoned him to the priesthood. He forthwith resolved to relinquish his medical studies, and devote himself to the work of the ministry.

Luke, the beloved physician, became the companion of the Apostles and the first ecclesiastical historian of Christianity. William Williams, the medical student, became the fellow-worker of the great Founders of Methodism, and eminent as a preacher, but more eminent still as the sacred poet of Wales. "It is not too much to say that his Welsh hymns have never been approached by the productions of any other writer in the language. . . . He also wrote some English hymns, several of which—such as "Guide me, O, thou great Jehovah" and "O'er those gloomy hills of darkness"—are found in very many selections in that language." *

Persecution.

Mr. Williams took deacon's orders in the Establishment in 1740, but his Church career was a short one. In his first curacy his Methodist irregularities gave so much offence that a representation was made to the Bishop. When he came to the prelate for priest's orders, he was peremptorily refused. He therefore withdrew himself from the Established Church, and gave himself to work among the Methodists.

Hay, therefore, gave to Methodism its first martyr, to Welsh Methodism its unrivalled Singer, and to Wesleyan-Methodism its Missionary Martyr.†

Oxford Road Chapel.

The temptation to linger amid the sacred associations of the old chapel is very great. The host of mighty men who ministered in the Watton Chapel stood before the Lord there. But

* Rev. W. Williams's "Calvinistic Methodism."
† See "James Stewart Thomas." Chap. xix.

we must move on. When the Rev. Joseph Dunning was stationed at Hay, steps were taken to build a new chapel, larger and more commodious. The site in Oxford Road was purchased for seventy pounds by Mr. Thomas Trouneer, of Sheep House, from J. Moore, Esquire, trustee for the sale of the Estates of the Right Honourable Edward, Earl of Oxford, and Earl Mortimer. In 1823 the chapel was dedicated to Almighty God by the Rev. James Dixon, who was then residing in Gloucester. Mr. Trouneer drove in his gig to Gloucester to fetch the preacher.

Renovations.

When the Rev. John Bond lived at Hay in 1852-3, extensive improvements were made, pews superseding benches, &c.

In 1874, when Mr. James Michael was chapel steward, the Memorial Schools were erected, and the chapel thoroughly renovated. Mr. Michael initiated the scheme, which was successfully accomplished. £800 was required, a bazaar was held, and the work completed. At the re-opening services the Revs. Edward J. Robinson, Richard Roberts, and Mr. J. Pryce Jones, of Grove Park, Wrexham, officiated.

In 1885-6 the chapel-keeper's house was re-built at a cost of £130. Further improvements were made in 1887-8. Additional premises were required for the rapidly-increasing Sunday School, and it was thought desirable to replace the harmonium with an organ. This outlay would cost £400. On the 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th of September, 1887, a very successful bazaar was held. The promoters worked admirably, and their laudable and strenuous efforts were richly rewarded; and to the great relief of the Rev. James Hanby and Messrs. Terrett and Evans, the chapel stewards, the proceeds exceeded the most sanguine expectations. The *Hay Bazaar Times* contained brief reports of the proceedings, and a list of the workers. The bazaar was opened by Messrs H. C. Rich, J.P., Hugh Beavan, of Bridgend, and the Rev. T. Wynne Jones.

On Friday, March 23rd, 1888, the re-opening services were held. In the afternoon there was an organ recital, the dedicatory prayer was offered by the Superintendent of the Circuit, and an address on "Methodism and Sacred Music" delivered by the Rev. James Hanby. In the evening the Rev. John Bond, of London, preached to a crowded congregation. On the Sunday following the services were continued, when sermons were preached by the Rev. T. Wynne Jones. The total proceeds of the re-opening services exceeded £50.

In the foregoing sketch the story of Wesleyan Methodism in Hay has been briefly told. For one hundred and fifty years the penetrating ethereal fire of the great revival has been working

there, and its purifying effects will ultimately present the town to the martyr's God, as "the king's daughter," "all glorious within." When brave Seward stood in Black Lion Green in 1742 the town was notorious for its wickedness and spiritual darkness, but, thanks to the glorious awakening, Hay has changed. From its venerable Established Church, its vigorous Nonconformist Churches, and its Christian homes, spiritual forces and ennobling influences go forth, and these are the prophetic guarantee that the appointed task of Wesley the evangelist and Seward the martyr will be fulfilled.

Methodism's earliest adherents at Hay were men and women after God's own heart. One name only of the first generation remains in remembrance, the Squire of Pentwyn. The brave and earnest Eynon Beynon braved persecution and opposition "constrained by the love of Christ."

"One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh." The second generation has the names of Jonathan Thomas, Thomas Trouneer, Richard Lewis, John Dearden, and others. The third generation also passeth away. During the past three years some revered and venerable Methodists departed from the Church militant to the Church triumphant. Their memory is fragrant, and the temptation to indulge in personal reminiscences is great, but must be overcome. Let their honoured names merely be recorded here: Thomas J. Walker, for forty years a faithful minister of the New Testament; John Gritton, lovely and pleasant in his life, for fifty years an acceptable local preacher and a devoted class leader; Thomas Williams, transparent and humble as a child, a mighty man in prayer; Mrs. Michael, calm, peaceful, and hospitable, who for many years sat at the Master's feet, and obtained "the one thing needful"; Mrs. Parker, "a mother of Israel." When the Great Head of the Church summoned these aged pilgrims home, He also commanded one of the fourth generation to rest. Greatly beloved, deeply lamented, and gratefully remembered, Mrs. Barlow Brown, wife of the Rev. Barlow Brown, then stationed at Hay, entered the King's palace.

"Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth."

CHAPTER X.

GLASBURY CHAPEL.

. . . . "British Isle her Christian Fanes,
Each linked to each for kindred services:
Her spires, her steeple-towers with glittering vanes,
Far-kenned; her chapels lurking among trees,
Where a few villagers, on bended knees,
Find solace which a busy world disdains."—WORDSWORTH.

GLASBURY adorns a charming neighbourhood within twelve miles of Brecon. During the summer months of the year 1805, a Wesleyan Methodist preacher might frequently be seen standing on the village green proclaiming the truth of God.

Anyone visiting this beautiful and picturesque Wye-side village, and observing the peaceable demeanour of its inhabitants, would doubtless deem it an ideal spot for open-air preaching. How inspiring its almost matchless scenery! What lofty thoughts of the all-wise and benificent Creator assert their sway as we look across the fertile plain! What a charming spot for open-air services! Such, beyond doubt, it is now, thanks to the mighty revolution which Methodism inaugurated.

Things were, however, very different eighty-three years ago. The messenger of truth was cruelly maltreated, but compassion for man and love to God strengthened him. Opposition quenched not his ardour. Soon, however, a more formidable antagonist to open-air preaching made its appearance—Winter, and the brave man declared his intention of discontinuing visiting Glasbury until the following summer, unless someone would volunteer to furnish accommodation for himself and horse.

"Man's extremity is God's opportunity." A woman, who had been blessed under his ministry, prevailed upon her husband to invite the preacher to their house. This was done. The minister's name is forgotten, but, fortunately, the name of the woman, "whose heart the Lord opened," is not forgotten. Lydia of Thyatira is honourably mentioned in the history of the introduction of Christianity into Phillippi, and should not the name of Sarah Price, of Ciltwrch, be sacredly recorded in the history of the introduction of Methodism into Glasbury? Lydia constrained the Apostles to abide in her house; Sarah Price opened her house and welcomed the faithful evangelist.

Ciltwrch and Boughrood.

Many blessed services were held at Ciltwrch. Soon other houses opened their doors, and the maltreated and persecuted Methodist became the revered and beloved pastor of many in

Glasbury. His Lord richly rewarded them. "And into whatsover house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it." Such was the divine instructions given by our Lord to His Apostles, and the pioneer of Methodism in Glasbury was in the true Apostolic succession. His benediction of peace rested upon the sons and the daughters of these houses.

After the welcome accorded to the Methodist preacher at Ciltwrch, William Jones, timber merchant, opened his house, and if in no other cases, the evangelist's peace rested upon their children.

Thomas, the son of William Jones, laboured for fifty-three years with considerable success in the Methodist ministry (see Chap. xix.), and the daughter of William and Sarah Price, of Ciltwrch, still adorns the Church her sainted mother welcomed to her home; the old oak arm-chair, which served as Methodism's first pulpit in Glasbury is still in her possession, ultimately to become the property of the chapel there. Has not the prayer of peace offered at Ciltwrch brightened with joy and praise the many years of Miss Bella Price's affliction? Early in the history of our Church in this locality, Mrs. Price, assisted by Mr. David Price, schoolmaster, of Talgarth, inaugurated an early Christmas morning service, which maintained its first popularity until the year 1880, and which exerted a powerful influence on Glasbury Methodism.

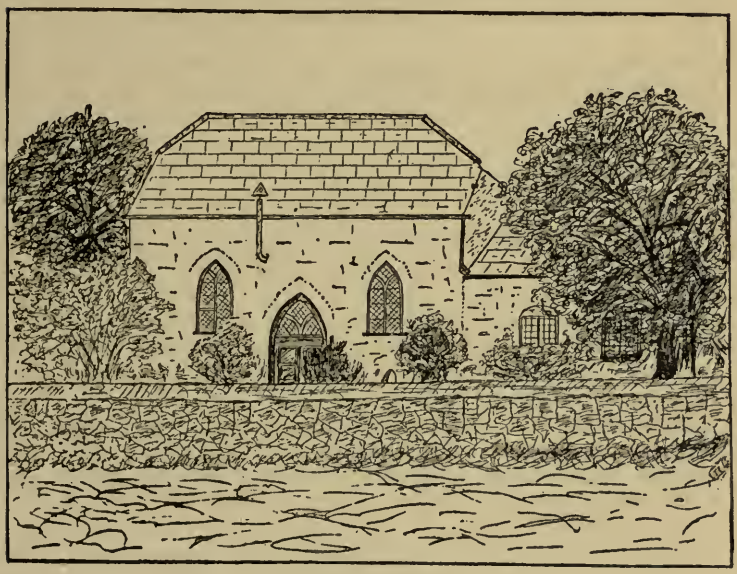
Stimulated, doubtless, by the novelty of the thing, Richard Hargest, the wealthy Squire of Skynlas, attended one of the services at Ciltwrch. Bethlehem's Saviour met him, and a few years later he became a zealous and devoted Methodist.

Chequered was the career of the Church in this locality. For four years Glasbury disappears from the circuit record. The home at Ciltwrch was broken up, and the ark found no resting-place. Ten of the most earnest members transferred themselves under the leadership of William Price, who resided at Boughrood Castle, and in whose house a society met.

Chapel Erected.

But God had not forsaken his people. Squire Hargest, like King David, found no rest "until he found out a place for the Lord, a habitation for the mighty God of Jacob." Speaking of this soon after the opening of the chapel, he said, "When traversing my fields, everything about me, even the birds, seemed to cry, Lost! lost! lost! Many times have I climbed the mountains alone to pray, but there was no peace, no rest. One day, in the summer of 1818, when crossing a meadow, God spoke to me and said, Give that corner of this meadow to the Methodists, and build a chapel." Thus did God answer the prayers of

His people. In October, 1818, the Squire gave the site for the chapel, and subscribed very liberally towards its erection. The original trustees were :—Messrs. Richard Hargest ; Clement Probert, Tymawr, Llanigon ; Richard Williams, Great House, Pipton ; Jonathan Thomas, Hay ; William Jones, Glasbury ; Edward Probert, Braddws ; Roger Pugh, Boughrood ; James Williams, Aberllunvy ; John Higgins, Painscastle ; and Thomas Jones, schoolmaster, Glasbury. The sanctuary was dedicated to



GLASBURY CHAPEL.

God on Tuesday, 1st December, 1818, the preachers who officiated being the Revs. William Timperley and John Rogers, circuit ministers. Four sermons were preached on the occasion, and some unknown aspirant to poetical fame has left his impression of the services as follows :—

LINES on the texts preached at the Opening of GLASBURY CHAPEL, on Tuesday, 1st December, 1818 :—

7th, first Samuel, 12 verse.

My Ebenezer here I'll raise,
In shouts and songs of endless praise ;
To the great God, who built this Frame
In honour of His glorious Name.

62d Isaiah, 1st verse.

For Zion I'll not hold my peace,
Till fill'd with truth and righteousness,
And light break forth from pole to pole,
And filled with faith is every soul.

27th Psalm, 4th verse.

Lord, to Thy house will I repair,
With holy joy and filial fear,
Till call'd to dwell with Thee above,
Where all is calm, and peace, and love.

Lord, in Thy temple I'll abide,
Till Thou shalt seat me by Thy side,
Where consolations ever flow,
And all Thy precious love I know.

9th, 2nd Cor. 8th verse.

God is sufficient of His grace,
To fill with love and holiness
The saints that may assemble here,
Till they before His face appear.

Yes, the "sufficiency of His grace," which was proclaimed at the closing service on the opening day, has for seventy years filled with love and holiness many saints who assembled in the unpretentious little sanctuary. Many of them have "before His face appeared," and precious to them, even among the joys of the Celestial City, are the memories of Cwmbach Chapel.

June, 1819, Glasbury re-appears in the Circuit-book, with a membership of twenty-two. Among them we find the name of Richard Hargest, and for twenty-four years he continued an ardent Methodist. Two other names appear for the first time, William Butcher and Jane Beavan. In June, 1821, Boughrood disappears, the society identified itself with Glasbury Church, and the faithful William Price appointed co-leader with Mr. Hargest. If space permitted, nothing could afford us greater pleasure than to linger in hallowed intercourse with the Prices, Hargests, Pughes, Joneses, Beavans, Butchers, Bynons, and Willises, of Glasbury; but this is not possible. Hereafter may the privilege be ours.

The Burial Ground.

In 1836 Mr Hargest gave the burial ground, which is attached to the chapel. The story of the transfer of the land for its mournful purpose is very pathetic—M. A. Clements, a young woman who had found the Saviour in the chapel, when dying, expressed a wish to be buried near the sacred spot. Squire Hargest, when he heard of it, immediately conveyed the ground to the trustees, and the mortal remains of M. A. Clements rest there.

Renovations.

The chapel was renovated in the year 1867, and the Rev. Richard Roberts, afterwards President of the Conference, lectured in the Baptist Chapel, in connection with the re-opening services.

In the year 1880 the interior of the chapel was beautified, lamps and a chandelier supplanted the candlesticks, and the exterior of the building was stuccoed. 1887 witnessed further

improvements. The pulpit was lowered, a new communion table replaced the old; the ceiling of the schoolroom was raised, and the furniture painted.

Trustees.

The Jubilee of the chapel was celebrated in the year 1868. Of the ten trustees originally appointed, only one lived to see the Jubilee year—the venerable Jonathan Thomas,* of Hay. It therefore became necessary to appoint additional ones. The names added were:—Charles Butcher* and W. Vaughan,* of Glasbury; R. Brearley, W. Owen,* James Michael, and J. P. Lloyd, of Hay; H. C. Rich, D. Jones,* W. J. Roberts,* O. P. Larkin, J. E. Nott, and W. M. Brien, of Brecon; and D. Price, of Talgarth.

Chapel Steward.

In 1886 Mr. Thomas Jones, of Skynlas, was appointed chapel steward. Skynlas is true to its Methodist traditions.

Memorial Tablet.

A massive tablet adorns the chapel. Squire Hargest, of Skynlas, richly deserved such a tribute. Eccentric, doubtless, in many things, but his loyalty to Methodism never wavered. The following inscription on the tablet shows that he regarded wealth as a stewardship:—

Sacred to the Memory of
RICHARD HARGEST, Esquire, late of Skynlas,
Who fell asleep in Jesus, March 22nd, 1842, and was buried in Glasbury Churchyard, in the 69th year of his age. He bequeathed by his last Will, bearing date March 20th, 1842, unto the Trustees of this Chapel for the time being, £280, to be by them invested in the purchase of Three pounds per centum consolidated Bank annuities, and to be for ever continued in the names of the said Trustees and their successors upon the following Trust, that is to say, out of the interest of the same sum to lay out one pound per annum towards the repairs of this Chapel, and to pay the further sum of £2 per annum out of the said interest to the Wesleyan Ministers' Auxiliary Fund, and also to pay and apply the surplus of the sum for supporting the preaching of the Gospel in the Chapel, and that the said Trustees shall render an account from time to time of the application of the said interest at the Quarterly Meetings of the Circuit. He also bequeathed a legacy of £100 to the Missionary Society in aid of Foreign Missions, and also gave and forgave the sum of £94 due to him from the Trustees of the said Chapel. This monument was erected as a mark of esteem by his numerous friends, by whom he was much and deservedly loved.

The little chapel at "Cwmbach," as it is familiarly called, has long been noted for its enthusiastic missionary meetings. The annual meeting is always held on the evening of the September quarterly meetings, and the gathering of friends from all parts gives a happy key-note to the winter meetings of the Circuit.

* Since deceased.

CHAPTER XI.

TALGARTH.

"There is a place where spirits blend,
Where friend holds fellowship with friend;
Though sundered far, by faith they meet,
Around one common mercy seat."

This borough by prescription, without privilege, jurisdiction, or municipal officers, is situated nine miles from Brecon, and within a short distance of Trevecca,—the birthplace of Howel Harris, and the scene of his marvellous labours and triumphant death. In Talgarth Church God arrested him in the year 1735; thirty-eight years later the remains of the holy Apostle of Wales were interred in the same church. The following is the

Inscription in Talgarth Church:

Near the altar lie the remains of Howel Harris, Esq., born at Trevecka, January 23rd, 1713-14. O.S. Here where his body lies he was convinced of sin, had his pardon sealed, and felt the power of Christ's precious Blood at the Holy Communion. Having tasted grace, he resolved to declare to others what God had done for his soul. He was the first itinerant preacher of Redemption in this period of revival in England and Wales. He preached the Gospel for the space of thirty-eight years, until he was taken to his final rest. He received all who sought salvation to his house. Thence sprung up the family at Trevecka, to whom he faithfully ministered unto his end, as an individual servant of God and faithful member of the Church of England. His end was more blessed than his beginning. Looking to Jesus crucified, he rejoiced to the last that death had lost its sting. He fell asleep at Trevecka, July 21st, 1773, and now rests blessedly from all his labours.

Trevecca College.

In the year 1752, Harris, after his separation from Daniel Rowlands, laid the foundation of a house at Trevecca, where he preached daily to immense congregations. Many persons went to live in the "family," devoting themselves to the work of the Lord under his direction.

John Wesley visited the place in 1763. Writing in his Journal, under date "August 19th," he says:—"Rode over to Trevecca (from Brecknock). Howell Harris's house is one of the most elegant places I have seen in Wales, The little chapel, and all things round about it, are finished in an uncommon taste; and the gardens, orchards, fishponds, and mount adjoining, make the place a little paradise. He thanks God for these things, and looks through them. About six score persons are now in the family, all diligent; all constantly employed, all fearing God, and working righteousness,"

Sixteen years later, in 1768, the Countess of Huntingdon opened her College at Lower Trevecca (now called College Farm).

In the year 1842 Harris's house was transferred to the South Wales Calvinistic Methodist Association for the purposes of a college. Lady Huntingdon's College was removed to Cheshunt in 1792.

Memorial Chapel to Howel Harris.

The celebration of the centenary of Harris's death took a very appropriate form. July 21st, 1873, a beautiful Memorial Chapel was opened at Trevecca. Behind the pulpit the following inscription is placed in a fine medallion border:

This Chapel was erected in memory of Howel Harris, born at Trevecca January 23rd, 1714, died there July 21st, 1773, and was interred near the Communion Table in Talgarth Church. His powerful preaching was blessed of God to the conversion of many souls, and the reviving of religion in all parts of Wales.

Wesleyan Methodism at Talgarth.

The chapel was erected in 1849, but Wesleyan Methodism in Talgarth dates from a much earlier period than that. As early as 1806 there was a small society there. Mr. David Price,* schoolmaster, and his wife † were among the first-fruits of Methodism there. Their son, Mr. David Price, of Mount Pleasant, who has for many years been the principal supporter of the Church at Talgarth, has in his possession class-tickets dating from 1806. Tickets, bearing date September, 1813, have these words written upon them:—"Admitted into Society at Talgarth. Thos. C. Rusforth." As far as can be ascertained, David Price and his wife ceased their connection with Methodism for a year or two. In 1813 he, however, appears as the class-leader. Two years later (in 1815) Talgarth disappears for many years from the Circuit record.

Midsummer, 1834, it re-appears with eight members, and "Leader, Bro. Chilton."

Mr. Chilton, who was an Excise Officer, came to Talgarth in 1833, and immediately invited the Brecon ministers to preach in his house,—now called Church Villa, situated where the road branches, just opposite the Board Schools. A church was formed, and among the members we find the well known names of Price, Mills, and Watkins.

In January, 1839, Mr. Chilton left Talgarth, and John Beynon, of Glasbury, performed the duties of class-leader until his tragic

* Died January 9th, 1825, aged 43 years.
† Died March 21st, 1850, aged 70 years.

death.* The church met for years in Mr. Mills's house, near the Tower Bridge.

Chapel Erected.

Efforts were made to obtain a site for a chapel, but without success. Ultimately, however. in 1849, "William Games, of Brecon, gentleman," sold the present site for "£57 10s. for the residue of the said term of nine hundred years (granted in 1785) now to come and unexpired."

Preparations were made for erecting the chapel, which was opened in the year 1850 by the Rev. Paul Orchard.

January, 1876, additional land was acquired on the east side of the ground in front of the chapel, also "the right of putting in any windows that shall be required"; the trustees agreeing to pay an annual rental of ten shillings.

Ten years later, in 1886, the chapel was renovated, and this additional land walled in.

Trustees.

The trustees appointed in 1849 were:—Messrs. D. Price, Richard Mills, George Mills, of Talgarth; T. Prothero Price, John Price, D. E. Davies, Thomas Head, Joseph Link, J. M. Powell, H. C. Rich, and W. J. Roberts, of Brecon; Charles Butcher, Robert Brearly, J. Evans, Isaac Cook, and the Rev. Paul Orchard.

For nearly forty years Mr. D. Price has faithfully discharged the duties of Chapel Steward.

Wesleyan Methodism has never flourished much in Talgarth. But who can tabulate the spiritual results of the little church?

Someone has said, "Methodism is doing to-day what she has always done—sending workers to other churches. That is not by any means her least work, and the brightest star in the crown of Methodism is her influence upon other churches."

Is this not true of the Methodist Church at Talgarth?

* John Beynon, his son, and three fellow-workmen were crossing the Wye at Glasbury, a sudden gale swept down the river, the boat capsized, and the four men were drowned. Beynon was buried in the graveyard at Cwmbach, Glasbury.

CHAPTER XII.

THE LOCK CHAPEL.

"There the Good Shepherd loves to lead,
In noontide heat His little flock;
There they repose and there they feed,
Beneath the shadow of the Rock.

The Lock is a beautiful spot on the banks of the Usk, and situated about two miles from Brecon. When the Rev. Hugh Hughes was appointed the second time to Brecon, in the year 1831, the Welsh Circuit comprised Brecon, Devynnock, and Pwllgloew. Mr. Hughes possessed an aggressive spirit, and believed that the presence of Methodism in the villages of Wales would greatly benefit the Church of God.

Llanfrynach presented a tempting opening, and the good man wished to avail himself of it. But how could he supply the place with regular preaching? The question suggested a plausible plan. At Llangurig, in the Llanidloes Circuit, Mr. Hughes had met John Rees, a young schoolmaster, who was an exemplary Christian and a successful local preacher.

Mr. Hughes invited him to open a day-school at Llanfrynach, and to assist him on the Sundays. Mr. Rees complied, and Methodist services were regularly held in the schoolroom. The attendance rapidly increased, and everything augured favourably for a flourishing village church.

But in January, 1834, the earnest and energetic village schoolmaster was called of God into the ranks of the Christian ministry. How the cause fared subsequent to his removal, we have no means of ascertaining, but when the Conference of 1847 appointed him to the superintendency of the Welsh Circuit, he found, to his sorrow, that the work so auspiciously commenced had not realised its early promise, and that on the site where a Methodist Chapel should have been erected a Baptist Chapel stood.

How long the Ark found a resting-place in the schoolroom, no one can tell; doubtless, "another king arose which knew not" our Israel; but the hand of the Lord was with them, and for a period of nine years Methodist services were regularly held in the cottages of the late William Williams, Velindre, and Anne Williams (Nancy Williams, Ty Corner), Llanfrynach.*

Mr. Rees, in 1847, obtained a site at the Lock from Sir Charles M. R. Morgan, Baronet, Tredegar Park, and a new

* She is now in her ninety-ninth year, and vividly and gratefully remembers the Methodist fathers.—(July, 1888).

chapel was erected* which cost £30. On the 16th of May, 1849, the little sanctuary was opened for divine worship by the Revs. Thomas Aubrey,† and William Davies, Bailie. Mr. Rees presented the Trustees with a Bible and Hymn-book for the pulpit; he was also indefatigable in collecting subscriptions towards the building fund. Mr. Joseph Bailey, M.P., contributed £10, and Mr. Watkins, Pennoyre, £5.

Prior to the year 1886, the whole of the original Trustees had finished their course, and the estate had been administered by the late Thomas Jones and William Powell,‡ of Groesffordd. That year new trustees were appointed.

The Church at the Lock is not numerically strong, but it is exceedingly faithful, and the memory of many earnest Methodists is reverently cherished there. William Williams of Velindre, and his wife Bridget, Roger Powell, Thomas Jones, and William Powell of Groesffordd, are gratefully remembered.

CHAPTER XIII.

DEVYNNOCK CHAPEL.

"We love the venerable house
Our fathers built to God;
In heaven are kept their grateful vows,
Their dust endears the sod."—EMERSON.

THIS interesting village is nine miles from Brecon. No account of Wesleyan Methodism in Devynnock would be considered complete which did not contain a brief sketch of the family of Bailie, Maescar.

The Squire of Bailie, Walter Williams, identified himself at a very early date with the Wesleyan Church in Brecon. An old Circuit Record contains the following entry:—"1780. Quarterly contingencies for the Circuit to be paid by Mr. Walter Williams, general steward, at every quarterly accounts."

* The builder was the late John Hargest, of Brecon.

† Mr. Aubrey was born at Cefncoed-y-cymer, May 13th, 1808, and died at Rhyl on November 15th, 1867. He possessed a remarkable gift of eloquence; he had a complete knowledge of the Welsh language, admired its genius, discovered much of its neglected wealth, and wielded its oratorical force with singular ability and success. He was Chairman of the North Wales District for eleven years, and the North Wales Chapel Fund was the outcome of his administrative genius.

‡ Both these excellent men were called to their everlasting rest before the Charity Commissioners had completed their transaction.

Some years after the death of his wife, Mr. Williams married the widow of John Watkins, Glanusk (see page 34). Mrs. Williams had joined the Methodists in the year 1753. She died in 1825, having been a Church member for seventy-two years.

Mr. Williams had one son, and Mrs. Watkins one daughter. These two became man and wife. Walter Williams, senior, died March 12th, 1797, in his fifty-fourth year; his son, Walter Williams, junior, had died a year earlier, in the twenty-ninth year of his age, leaving a young widow and five children. The eldest of these was the Rev. Walter R. M. Williams, M.A., Chaplain under the East India Company at Bombay, where he died in 1818. The second daughter, Margaret, was the wife of the Rev. William Davies, Bailie.

The Bailie family formerly held a high position in the county of Brecon. It is stated that at the time of the Battle of Waterloo, a large number of French prisoners of war were placed as hostages at Bailie, when Elizabeth Williams, the widow of Walter Williams, junior, was sole heiress of the estate.

Wesley at Bailie.

The illustrious evangelist often made Bailie his home when visiting Brecon. Two incidents of interest in connection with Wesley and the family of Bailie deserve special notice.

Under date Monday, April 23rd, 1781, the following record appears in the journals: "Being informed that it was fifty miles to Brecknock (from Worcester), we set out early; but on trial we found they were computed miles. However, taking fresh horses at the Hay, I just reached in time, finding a large company waiting."

"Wednesday, 25th, I set out for Carmarthen, but Joseph Bradford was so ill that after going six miles I left him at a friend's house, and went on myself."

The "friend's house" was Bailie-Maescar, and it is said that Bradford, Wesley's faithful travelling companion, was laid up there for three months.

Second incident. When the venerable apostle visited Brecon in September, 1790, he drove to Bailie to breakfast on his way to Carmarthen. Mrs. Walter Williams, junior, brought her first-born and asked the saintly evangelist to bless her babe. Wesley did so, and the babe became a successful chaplain. A few months later the great and good man finished his extraordinary career.

Wesleyan Methodism in Devynnock.

The Church in this village is more closely connected with the rise of Methodism in Carmarthenshire than in Breconshire.

In the year 1806, the Revs. William Davies (Africa) and Edward Jones (Bathafarn), who were then residing at Machynlleth, visited the counties of Carmarthen and Cardigan. Their evangelistic tour was remarkably prosperous. Earnest aggressive work was the glory of early Methodism, and Wesley's characteristic motto is still the inspiration of his followers—"The world is my parish."

These men were owned of God, and churches were founded at Llandilo, Llandovery, Cardigan, Carmarthen, and other places. In 1807 they reached Devynnock. Immediately on their arrival they mounted the horseblock in front of the Bull Inn to deliver their divine message.

Mr. Davies preached the first sermon from the words—"And the lord said unto his servants: Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." Mr. Jones followed him with a powerful discourse, from the words—"And the servant said: Lord it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room."

How appropriately these words portray the sublime and God-honoured mission of Methodism!

During the following year the Rev. David Rogers visited the neighbourhood, and sojourned for a short time there, preaching at Llwyncrychyd and other places.

Despite a determined outburst of persecution with which the advent of Methodism was greeted, our Church prospered exceedingly in Devynnock. Fierce antagonism, instead of retarding its progress, quickened its speed; instead of enfeebling its energies, evolved its victorious powers; and the undisguised hatred of lawless rabble won for it the sympathy and adherence of a considerable number of the most influential families in the locality.

Chapel Erected.

The chapel was erected in the year 1809. For two years services were held at the Park, Llwyncrychyd, Bailie, and other places. The most prominent figures in the story of the erection of the chapel are those of Messrs. David Price, Park, and John Jones, Llwyncrychyd. They inaugurated the building scheme, collected the funds, and superintended the erection. The original subscription list, which is now in the possession of Mr. James, is headed with an appeal for assistance, and reads:—"Devynnock, February 14th, 1809. It has just been proposed to erect a chapel for the use of the Wesleyans, late in connection with the Rev. John Wesley, M.A., not at all in the spirit of faction or discord, but of that Gospel which breathes universal goodwill towards men. We wish to act humbly, hoping such a step will be for the furtherance of the Gospel. We, whose names

are here subscribed, are willing to give the under-mentioned sums."

Then follows a list of contributions, but we learn, on the authority of the late Rev. Lot Hughes, that the trustees subscribed £15 each to the building fund.

A site on the bank of the river Senny, was purchased for £5 of Mr. John Powell, a lawyer practising in Brecon, and £32 was paid for conveying the property, etc.

Opening Services.

The temple completed, the dedicatory services were eagerly anticipated. Ministers of high repute, the pioneers of Methodism in Devynnock, were invited to officiate. The great day came; multitudes gathered to see the new edifice, and to hear the "new gospel," and the new preachers. Messrs. Edward Jones, David Rogers, and W. Davies delivered their message with the old apostolic power, old sights followed, men and women sought the Lord. "Many were added to the Church," and Watti Lloyd and Joshua Davies were appointed class-leaders.

The prospects were bright and encouraging, but the fair, serene, and cloudless morn was followed by a dark and threatening noon. "Woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" Watti Lloyd betrayed his sacred stewardship. Contending parties striving for pre-eminence assumed hostile attitudes, and the Church which bid so fair was wrecked.

What bitter, relentless persecution failed to accomplish, divisions among the Christians successfully did.

When the Rev. Hugh Hughes came to Brecon in 1812, he strenuously strove to heal their divisions. Vain, however, proved his efforts, and the good man was persuaded that, where conciliatory measures failed, extreme ones might succeed. Acting on this advice, he dissolved the society, destroyed the membership roll, and proceeded to form a new society.

This was the crisis! The extreme deed ruined Methodism. The most upright and influential members resented the act, and withdrew. Their allegiance was transferred to the Established Church, in which section of the Church of Christ many of their descendants abide now.

Methodism in Devynnock never regained the glory of 1812.

Mr. Hughes mourned that extreme procedure to the end of his life.

What of Watti Lloyd? Some say that his subsequent career was the reverse of happy and prosperous. Human strength cannot successfully defy the Divine "Woe."

Should not this be a warning to all Christian communities? The prosperity of a church is not dependent on the attitude of outsiders, but on harmony of spirit, unity of purpose,

prevalency of brotherly love and genuine piety among the members thereof. Though the clouds gather and thicken into blackness the sun will rise; though the mightiest tempest hurls its forces, the tide will flow.

Trustees at Devynnock.

April 15th, 1809, the following Trustees were appointed:—Watkin Watkins, gentleman, Devynnock; Philip Morgan, gentleman, Devynnock; Edward Jones, Wesleyan Minister, Llandilo; D. Walter Powell, gentleman, Little Hall; John Powell, gentleman, Maespoeth; Thomas Powell, gentleman, Yscleidach; David Price, gentleman, Park; Howell Powell, gentleman, Cefn'rhosan; David Lewis, gentleman, Devynnock; John Downes, gentleman, Penbryn; John Jones, farmer, Llwyncrychyd; John Jones, farmer, Coed Howell; John Williams, farmer, Gelli; Robert Phillips, farrier, Penpont; David Davies; Henry Lloyd; W. Havard; Joshua Jones; J. Hargest; W. Walters; and Thomas Price.

These were the men who championed the new doctrine and the new preachers, who subscribed fifteen pounds each towards the erection of the new chapel, and who promised to administer the estate. Many of these Watti Lloyd's unfaithfulness drove away. Some of them retained their connection with Methodism to the end.

It has been stated in the course of this sketch that the brightest star in the crown of Methodism is her influence upon other churches. This is undoubtedly true of Devynnock Methodism.

Watti Lloyd's rebellion may have wrecked the visible church there, but on divine authority, we say, the influence of early Methodism there, lives and operates to-day.

Let the reader again glance over the list of trustees. How familiar many of the names are to him. Names which occupy prominent positions in the Church of Christ, names which adorn the ministry of the Word, names which are honourably associated with religious and philanthropic efforts: and how much of the earnest enthusiasm, deep piety, and aggressive spirit of the noble Methodist ancestors, may be traced in the evangelical fervour, ardent devotion, and self-sacrificing zeal of these, none can tell.

Watkin Watkins, the Squire of Bedlwyn, was Methodism's first trophy at Devynnock. He died soon after the opening of the chapel in March, 1818, in his eightieth year.

Philip Morgan. How familiar this name sounds! He was the grandfather of the late Rev. Philip Morgan, M.A., Vicar of Llanhamlech, and great-grandfather of the Misses Morgan, Buckingham Place, Brecon, whose indefatigable labours in the temperance cause are so well-known.

David Price. Methodism's earliest worker at Devynnock. For many years Park was one of the Methodist sanctuaries and homes of the neighbourhood. The preachers prayed, preached, and rested there. How long the Park family continued in connection with Methodism, there is no means of ascertaining, but the second and third generations were influenced by her ministry and power, and these Methodist influences doubtless are traceable in the earnest evangelical ministry of the grandsons of the Methodist trustee—the Revs. Rees Price, B.D., Vicar of Saint David's, Brecon, and David Price, for many years chaplain of H.M. Prison in Brecon.

Howell Powell, the owner of Cwm-wysg ucha, Maesydd, Penbryn, and other places, and uncle of the Rev. Canon Powell Edwards, Vicar of Caerleon.

Thomas Powell and D. Walter Powell, the uncles of the late Jeffreys Powell, Esq., of Bronllys.

John Downes, of Penbryn, the uncle of Mr. Thomas Downes, Maesmawr, Talybont.

John Jones, Llwyncrychyd. His son, David Jones, who married the daughter of the Rev. Thomas Webb, was for several years circuit steward in Brecon.

Robert Phillips, of Penpont, who joined the Methodists in the year 1770.

Renovations.

In the year 1830 the chapel was much improved. A gallery was erected to which access was available up a flight of steps at the back of the building. Twenty-two years later additional renovations were effected. The chapel was re-roofed, and the gallery stairs removed to the interior. The gallery was removed in 1872, and the chapel altered to its present state.

On the 23rd of June, 1854, new trustees were appointed.

The ardent Methodist loves to linger amid the sacred associations of Devynnock Methodism. Memorial tablets in the church and inscriptions in the churchyard, speak of a grand past. In the church we find a tablet erected in memory of the East India Chaplain, upon whose head the great Evangelist breathed his benediction of peace. The churchyard is sacred with the dust of many of the first fruits of Methodism in the neighbourhood: Walter Williams, senior, of Bailie, who died in 1797; Ellinor, his wife, the relict of the sainted Watkins of Glanusk, who was a member of the Watton Church for seventy-two years. Also Walter Williams, junior, who died in 1796, leaving a widow and five children, a man of sterling qualities, as his epitaph will show:—

> "This humble stone (what few vain marbles can)
> May truly say, Here lies an honest man,
> How loved: how much lamented when he fell,

Let all who knew the worthy Williams tell.
Kind reader: Keep thyself as free from blame,
And thou wilt leave behind, as fair a name."

In the same grave was interred the body of Elizabeth, his widow, the daughter of John Watkins.

Close to this spot lie the mortal remains of the Rev. W. Davies and his wife, who survived him but eleven days. David's pathetic lamentation portrays their life: "They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided." The evening shades had closed around them, but their niece, the youthful bride of the late Rev. W. Worker, fell in the morning of life, aged 22 years.

Not far from their resting places, those of well-nigh all the original trustees may be seen, and of many who during the past eighty years adorned Methodism and Christianity. Side by side the life-long companions and ministerial co-workers lie, Isaac Jenkins and Henry Wilcox.

CHAPTER XIV.

PWLLGLOEW.

Pwllgloew Chapel was opened in 1814. The site was purchased for £10, of David Davies, of the parish of Llandevaelog Vach, gentleman. The hamlet of Pwllgloew is situated about four miles from Brecon, in the picturesque Vale of Honddu, on the high road to Builth and North Wales. Traversing the country, regardless of distance and toil, the early Methodist preachers undoubtedly often delivered their sacred message to the people of this little way-side hamlet.

Steps were taken in 1814 by the venerable Hugh Hughes to consolidate the work, and to garner in the fruit of these casual visitations.

Respectable and influential farmers professed allegiance to this "new sect," opened their houses for Divine worship, and gladly welcomed the new preachers. Among others, the families of Pantllwyfan, Coed, Cefncoed, Pantycored, and Pontmaendu became Methodists.

Years ago Pwllgloew was a flourishing and vigorous Church, but removals, deaths, the erection of another Nonconformist chapel in the vicinity, together with other circumstances, have operated very adversely. The chapel is closed. Strenuous efforts were made in 1886 to resuscitate the languishing Church, but apparently without success. After mature deliberation, the

quarterly meeting of the Circuit, acting on the advice of the Chairman of the Swansea and South Wales Districts, resolved to discontinue the services for some months at least. The last ordinary Sabbath service was held there on the 31st of July, 1887, and by a remarkable and unforeseen coincidence, it was a memorial service. Miss Joan Probert, of Cefncoed Bach, the last of the early Methodists of Pwllgloew, had finished her course in peace. Was the coincidence prophetic? God alone knows.

Whatever the future of Pwllgloew chapel may be, its past record redounds to the honour of Methodism and the glory of God. Far and near, descendants of Pwllgloew Methodists render valiant and noble service for the God of their fathers among the people of their fathers' choice.

Pwllgloew enriched the Church triumphant, and the Church militant numbers in the ranks of her sacramental host the sons and daughters of Pwllgloew Methodists.

CHAPTER XV.

MINISTERS STATIONED IN THE CIRCUIT FROM 1770 TO 1888.

"They taught us how to live;
With blameless life girt round with sanctity,
Lowly in heart, in soul and purpose high,
Sweet lessons did they give."—W. H. Burleigh.

Since the year 1770, one hundred and eighty six ministers have travelled in Brecon. When the North Wales Circuit was formed, all aggressive and pioneer work in the northern division of the Principality was directed by the superintendent ministers, who resided in Brecon. One hundred years ago (1788) the circuit embraced the country from Merthyr Tydfil to Llanidloes. Gradually the sphere of labour extended, towns, villages, and hamlets were visited, and Methodism numbered its loyal adherents far and near. The circuit system and the itinerancy are regarded by many as the brightest achievements of Wesley's matchless organizing genius. Small churches in extensive and often sparsely populated districts are grouped together, and strong, influential, and not unfrequently affluent town churches become the recognised heads of these groups. Ministers are stationed in the most convenient centres from whence they, assisted by devoted and earnest lay preachers, itinerate among the several churches committed to their care.

Circuits are frequently re-arranged, extensive ones divided, and new centres of aggression formed. The country which the early ministers of Brecon superintended, has been divided and sub-divided, and the circuits which owe their existence to this are many. In 1799 Welshpool circuit was formed from Brecon, and Wrexham circuit from Welshpool in 1803. Merthyr-Tydfil was separated from Brecon in 1803, Brynmawr circuit from Merthyr in 1853, Tredegar in 1864, and Aberdare in 1873. Kington circuit was formed from Brecon in 1805. Knighton circuit from Kington in 1861, and Leominster in 1873, and in 1867, the Home Mission Station of Builth was formed.

We now come to a list of the ministers who have during the past one hundred and eighteen years laboured in this locality. Brief biographical sketches of the most illustrious will be given, and obituary notices of those whose sepulchres are among us.

Brecon (English). North Wales Circuit, 1770.

1770 Richard Henderson, William Pitt, John Undrell.
1771 James Dempster, Robert Empringham.
1772 John Furz, John Brettell
1773 James Barry, Stephen Proctor
1774 Stephen Proctor, Richard Whatcoat
1775 Richard Whatcoat, John Broadbent
1776 Thomas Carlill, George Mowatt
1777 James Wood John Moon
1778 John Watson, William Church
1779 John Watson, jun., Robert Swan
1780 John Prickard, Henry Robins
1781 Henry Robins, Nathaniel Ward
1782 John Leach, James Perfect
1783 John Leach, William Saunders
1784 Joseph Cole, Williams Hoskings
1785 William Warrener, John Cricket
1786 William Saunders, Thomas Jones
1787 William Holmes, Robert Cornish
1788 George Baldwin, William Church
1789 Joseph Jerom, William Church, John M'Kersey
1790 William Fish, John Cricket
1791 John Dean, William Heath
1792 John Dean, Stephen Wilson
1793 Wm. Hunter, junior, Joseph Bowes
1794 Cleland Kirkpatrick, Jos. Kyte
1795 Cleland Kirkpatrick, John Wood
1796 James Buckley, John Wood, John Jennings
1797 James Buckley, William Pearson, James Gill, Francis Collier
1798 William Pearson, John Jennings, James Gill, William Howarth
1799 Cleland Kirkpatrick, Joshua Fielden
1800, 1801 Joseph Cook, James Scholefield
1802 Cuthbert Whiteside, James Gartrell
1803, 1804 John Sydserff, Edward Higgins, Samuel Warren

(KINGTON CIRCUIT WAS FORMED 1805.)

1805 James Gartrell, Hugh Ransom
1806 David Deakin, Thomas Brockle-hurst
1807 David Deakin, William Constable
1808 William Hicks, James Armstrong
1809 William Hicks, John Radford
1810 William Radford, John Radford
1811 William Radford, William Muck-low
1812 Thomas Slinger, John Sumner
1813 Thomas C. Rushworth, William Edwards
1814 David Rodgers, Robert Jones, Owen Rees, Robert Garner
1815 George Birley, James Dixon
1816 George Birley, Evan Parry, William Davies
1817, 1818 William Timperley, J. Rogers
1819 Philip Rawlings, William Ball
1820 Philip Rawlings, Joseph Dunning
1821 John Hughes, Joseph Dunning
1822 John Hughes, Joseph Lowthian
1823 John Hughes, John Wheelhouse
1824 William Woodall, John Wheel-house
1825 John Wheelhouse, Thomas Hayes
1826 Thomas Hayes, John Symons
1827 Charles Haime, John Symons
1828 Charles Haime, Henry D. Lowe

1829 John Smith (1), Henry D. Lowe
1830 Joseph Armstrong, William Dawson
1831 Thomas Armett, William Dawson
1832 Thomas Armett, Edward Hanscombe
1833 John Nicklin, James Cooke, jun
1834 John Boyd, Richard Harding
1835 John Boyd, Thomas Jones (3)
1836, 1837 John Nicklin, G. F. White
1838 Daniel Hateley, Samuel T. Sproston
1839 Daniel Hateley, Samuel Lawrence
1840, 1841 Evan Parry, Richard Riley
1842 Richard Shepherd (1), George C. Harvard
1843 Richard Shepherd (1), George Smith
1844 Joseph Pratten, Joseph Wilkinson
1845 Joseph Pratten, William Worker
1846 Joseph Pratten, Richard Roberts
1847, 1848 William Davies, R. Roberts
1849, 1851 Paul Orchard, senior, and Paul Orchard, junior
1852, 1853 John Morgan, John Bond
1854 John Morgan, John T. Morley
1855 Thomas Webb, John T. Morley
1856 Thomas Webb, William Robinson
1857 Thomas Webb, Isaac Gould
1858, 1859 John Harding, Isaac Gould
1860 John Harding, Thomas Overton
1861 James Stott, Thomas Overton
1862, 1863 Charles Hillard, I. E. Page
1864 Charles Hillard, William C. Webb
1865, 1866 Edwin Thorley, James Pearce, William D. Walters

(BUILTH CIRCUIT WAS FORMED 1867.)

1867 Edwin Thorley, James Pearce
1868, 1869, 1870 William S. Bestall, George S. Stoker
1871 Frederick Balls, Ezra Nuttall
1872 Henry Lewis, Ezra Nuttall
1873 Lancelot Railton, P. Campbell Jefferies
1874 Lancelot Railton, Joseph Sanger
1875 Lancelot Railton, Joseph Kendrew
1876 Fletcher Menhinick, Elias Lyon
1877 Fletcher Menhinick, Nicholas J. Willis
1878 Daniel G. Maillard, Joseph Bolton
1879 William J. Frankland, Joseph Bolton
1880, 1882 Richard Fletcher, T. Pinfield
1883, 1884 Joseph Hirst, W. B. Brown
1885 T. Wynne Jones, W. Barlow Brown
1886, 1888 T. Wynne Jones, J. Hansby

Brecon (Welsh). Crickhowell Circuit, 1808-1809.

1808 William Batten, Griffith Hughes, Evan Edwards
1809 Griffith Hughes, James James, Robert Jones, junior
1810 Owen Jones, Humphrey Jones, John Jones, junior
1811 Humphrey Jones
1812, 1813 Hugh Hughes, Lot Hughes

(JOINED TO BRECON, ENGLISH.)

1815 Robert Jones, senior, William Davies, junior

(JOINED TO BRECON, ENGLISH.)

1820 John Jones (2), David Williams,
1821 Robert Humphreys

Llandilo and Brecon Circuit, 1822-1830.

1822, 1823 David Evans, Lewis Jones
1824, 1825 Edward Anwyl, Owen Jones
1826 Edward Anwyl, Evan Edwards
1827, 1828 William Hughes, E. Edwards
1829, 1830 John Williams (2), R. Owen

BRECON CIRCUIT.

1831—1833	Hugh Hughes	1858—1859	David Jones (2)
1834—1835	Thomas Thomas	1860	John Roberts (2)
1836—1838	William Williams (1)	1861	Henry Parry
1839—1841	John Hughes (2)	1862—1864	Evan Richards
1842	Isaac Jenkins	1865—1867	Thomas Morgan
1843—1845	Lot Hughes	1868—1870	John Roberts (b)
1846	Lewis Williams	1871—1872	Daniel Marriott
1847—1848	John Rees	1873	John Evans (c)
1849—1850	Timothy Jones	1874—1875	Charles Nuttall
1851—1853	Isaac Jenkins	1876—1877	J. Augustus Jones
1854	John Jones (2)	1878—1879	William Davies (d)
1855	John Jones (1)	1880—1882	John Evans (c)
1856—1857	Timothy Jones	1883—1884	Peter Roberts.

(AMALGAMATED WITH BRECON ENGLISH, 1885.)

CHAPTER XVI.

EMINENT MINISTERS WHO TRAVELLED IN THE CIRCUIT.

"Holy and reverend was their ministry,
And, hark! a voice sounds from the heavenly mount,
'He that despiseth you, despiseth me.'"—BISHOP MANT.

No State can be mighty without gigantic men—men of stature; men intellectually, morally, and spiritually, at least head and shoulders higher than the other tall men of their time. What would English history have been—what would England be now, but for its greatest men? And the Head of the Church decides, both in His Word and by His dispensations, that His Church has need not only of gifts universally diffused and sovereignly distributed, but also of gifts signally accumulated and conspicuously concentrated in individual believers.

The course of Church history is marked not only by a "cloud of witnesses," but also by gleaming orbs "set in the open firmament." From Paul onwards, He has said of this and that man, "He is a chosen vessel unto Me," and in proportion to the Church's simplicity has been its devout recognition of such gifts. "And they glorified God in them."—(Dr. Gregory.)

Brecon Circuit, a little one among the thousands of our Israel, has been signally privileged. From the days of heroic Taylor several ministers of conspicuous ability, whose pulpit and platform powers were of the highest order, and whose administrative talents and brilliant services were rewarded with the most distinguished honours our Church could bestow, have travelled in this Circuit. We glorify God in them, and devoutly recognise and record their superior gifts.

Joseph Pilmoor.

When George Hudson was superintendent of "Wales Circuit" in 1767 and 1768, Joseph Pilmoor, who with Richard Boardman were the first ministers appointed to America, was one of his colleagues. After travelling two years in the Wales Circuit, he attended the Conference of 1769, which was held at Leeds.

It was at this Conference that the first appeal for Methodist preaching from America was presented by Wesley. "Who is willing to go?" he asked. Joseph Pilmoor and Richard Boardman volunteered their services, and were immediately appointed to the distant field. Methodism had already begun its work in the West Indies by Nathaniel Gilbert, who had formed a society of two hundred negroes in Antigua. Whitfield had spread it in spirit and in power among the independent churches of North America. Barbara Heck and Philip Embury had laid its foundation in New York. It was now to take an organic form in the New World by the agency of Wesley's lay preachers.

Methodism's First Missionary Collection.

"What can we do further in token of our brotherly love?" asked the great evangelist, after the appointment of Pilmoor and Boardman. "Let us now make a collection among ourselves," was the prompt response, and the liberal sum of seventy pounds was collected among these generous men, most of whom were habitual sufferers from want. Twenty of the seventy pounds were appropriated for the voyage of the two missionaries, and fifty were sent towards paying off the debt of Wesley Chapel, the first that ever bore that name, and the first Methodist Church of the western hemisphere.—(Stevens.)

From Brecon Joseph Pilmoor crossed the Atlantic to lay the foundations and to give an organic form to the greatest and most powerful Protestant Church in the world.

Richard Whatcoat.

The year 1774 was a year of trouble in Methodism. Wesley's famous "Deed of Declaration," the magna charta of our Church, was confirmed. Several ministers, whose names had been omitted from the "Legal Hundred," endeavoured to form a party among the preachers against it. The leaders of the opposition were Joseph Pilmoor, John Hampson, and William Eels. Fletcher's pious influence and earnest expostulation produced a temporary reconciliation. Ultimately, however, the principal agitators seceded from Methodism.

That year the Grand Jury at the Brecknock assizes deemed it

their duty to offer to the presiding judge a presentment against the "villainous schemes of these dangerous assemblies."*

Methodism outlived the secession, as well as the wrath of the Grand Jury.

That year young Whatcoat came to Brecon. Presumptious youth! To dare to enter the town when the anger of the Grand Jury was terrible to behold!

Richard Whatcoat's early life presents remarkable coincidences. In 1769, when Pilmoor quitted England to give Methodism its organic form in America, Whatcoat was admitted into the Methodist itinerancy in England. In 1774, when Pilmoor withdrew from Methodism in the New World, Whatcoat came to Brecon, Pilmoor's last circuit in the Old World. Ten years later, Whatcoat crossed the Atlantic with Dr. Coke and Thomas Vasey to give the Methodism of America its ecclesiastical organization, and to become in after years co-labourer with Coke and Asbury in the episcopate.

First Bishop and Presbyters.

Ten years after the secession of Pilmoor and the appointment of Whatcoat to Brecon, Wesley, at the request of Dr. Coke, ordained Whatcoat and Vasey "Presbyters," and appointed them to accompany him to America. The same day the great evangelist, assisted by other ordained ministers, set apart the great missionary by the imposition of hands and prayer to be superintendent of American Methodism.

Never before had Wesley made so serious an innovation upon church order. No act of his life was so momentous as this in its inevitable results. His brother Charles was astonished and perplexed. He could scarcely believe, he said, that in his eighty-second year his "old intimate friend and companion should have assumed the episcopal character, ordained elders, consecrated a bishop, and sent them to ordain our lay preachers in America." Miss Wedgwood understood this act of Wesley far better than the Poet of the Revival did—"He was led to it by a wisdom that was not his own."

Southey, Green, and others may attribute these innovations to Wesley's "peerless ambition." Pusey and English Churchmen may cling to the figment that Wesley remained a High Churchman to the end of his life, and that he did not suffer any of his preachers during his lifetime to administer the sacraments. The fact is Wesley did ordain about a score of lay preachers to administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper according to the usages of the Church of England. Well may Dr. Stevens say: "It is high time that such fictions should

* See "Grand Jury," Chap. vi.

cease among English Churchmen. It seems that they have yet to learn how thorough and noble a heretic Wesley really was."

The elect three, Coke, Vasey, and Whatcoat, landed in New York in November, 1784. On December 24th a general conference was held in Baltimore, under the presidency of the newly consecrated bishop. It was unanimously resolved to form the Methodist Church into an Episcopal Church, and to have superintendents, elders, and deacons. The question of title was also considered, and John Dickin, a Londoner by birth, who had been educated at Eton, and a classical scholar of much repute, proposed that it should be called "THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA." The conference agreed, and on the 27th of December, Francis Asbury was consecrated to the episcopate—America's second bishop.

Whatcoat Ordained a Bishop.

Sixteen years later—1800, it became necessary to strengthen the episcopate. Dr. Coke's time and energies were absorbed by foreign missions, and the venerable Asbury felt that the increasing responsibilities of his ever-widening diocese were too much for his decreasing strength.

Who among the noble apostles of the New World would be deemed worthy to act as coadjutor of Coke and Asbury?

Two names were mentioned: those of Richard Whatcoat, "a man of sound understanding, large experience, and well-known spiritual excellence," and Jesse Lee, the versatile, witty, energetic, and great-hearted apostle of New England. These were the nominees of the conference. Whatcoat was elected.

The years 1774 and 1784 present strange contrasts. In 1774 the youthful Whatcoat entered Brecon, when the bigotry and prejudice of the Grand Jury strove to crush Methodism; and far away in South Petherton, Thomas Coke, the accomplished ex-bailiff of the borough, notwithstanding his High Church notions, true-hearted loyalty to the traditions of his *alma mater*, utter indifference to all sorts of religion outside the walls of the parish church, sovereign contempt for Dissenters, possessing the highest academical degree, and bright prospects of ecclesiastical preferment, was struggling for divine light and imperceptibly drifting among the despised Methodists.

Ten years later (1784) Coke and Whatcoat sailed for the New World together, a bishop and an elder respectively of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Sixteen years more passed away, and Coke and Whatcoat co-operated as bishops of that great and influential Church.

Bishop Whatcoat died at Dover, U.S.A., July 5th, 1806.

Thus Brecon Methodism influenced the great Methodist Episcopal Church of America.

Pilmoor was the first missionary, Whatcoat the first elder, and Coke the first bishop.

James Wood.

Two years after Richard Whatcoat left Brecon, James Wood, a young minister of much promise, was appointed to the superintendency.

Many excellent clergymen of the Church of England esteemed highly the venerable Wesley, and co-operated with him in his evangelistic labours; they nobly shared the ignominy, and devoutly rejoiced in the remarkable progress of Methodism, and their memory is held in grateful remembrance by Methodists in all parts of the world. Prominent among them the following names appear: the Bishop of Londonderry, Vincent Perronet, the Vicar of Shoreham; his two sons, Edward and Charles, both clergymen, who frequently attended Wesley's conferences, and preached and travelled under his direction; Grimshaw, the earnest Rector of Hawarth; and Fletcher, of Madeley.

James Wood in early life enjoyed the privilege of sitting under the ministry of a Mr. Jesse, a pious clergyman, and a personal friend of Mr. Wesley. This earnest clergyman was his father in the Gospel. When eighteen years of age the young convert associated himself with the Methodists, Four years later, in 1773, he entered, under the sanction of our venerated Founder, the itinerant ministry, and for fifty-three years discharged its functions faithfully and well.

His loyal stewardship was recognised and rewarded. He sustained the highest offices of trust and responsibility in the Connexion. Twice was the honour of the Presidency conferred on him, in 1800 and in 1808. After sixty-seven years of sacred toil the aged servant entered into the joy of his Master, on the 17th of June, 1840, in the eighty-ninth year of his age.

James Buckley.

The handsome tablet in Lion Street Chapel was erected as a token of the high esteem in which Thomas Coke was held by the ministers and missionaries with whom he was united. The superintending of the work was entrusted to the Revds. T. Roberts, M.A., and J. Buckley.

Who were these men to whom the work was confided?

Mr. Roberts entered the ministry in the year 1786. Wesley esteemed him highly, and reposed in him the utmost confidence when matters of considerable importance and extreme delicacy required attention.

Mr. Buckley was five years his junior in the itinerancy, which he entered in 1791, when Wesley, the peerless and indefatigable

apostle of evangelical truth, was summoned to rest. It is said of Mr. Buckley, that his talents were considerable, his preaching powerful and persuasive; his disposition affectionate, amiable, and conciliatory, yet distinguished by firmness and decision of character.

That this eulogism is no vain platitude may be inferred from several incidents, among them, that at the comparatively early age of four-and-twenty he was appointed Superintendent of this Circuit, and further, when in 1813 the Missionary Society of our Church was formed, James Buckley was elected to preach the inaugural sermon.

This latter tribute to his distinguished abilities suggests a subject of considerable interest to Brecon Methodists, viz., the formation of the Wesleyan Foreign Missionary Society, and their interest in that event must be greatly enhanced when they know that a minister who lived and laboured in their circuit virtually launched the organisation, the purpose of which is to perpetuate the work which their own Dr. Coke so nobly commenced and earnestly prosecuted.

Wesleyan Missionary Society.

The Society was formed as a prudential preparation for an event which occurred much earlier than was anticipated—the death of Dr. Coke. It is the legatee of his labours, the executor of his enterprise. Methodist missions, therefore, date from a much earlier period than the formation of a Missionary Society. Joseph Pilmoor and R. Boardman were the first missionaries of Methodism. Indeed, when the first missionary meeting was held in Leeds, more than fifty missionaries were engaged in foreign lands. There were about seventeen thousand accredited Church members in Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, West Indies, Sierra Leone, Gibraltar, and other places. Seven additional missionaries were about to embark to Ceylon, Java, and the Cape of Good Hope, with Dr. Coke.

But how had the funds been raised for the sustenance of these extensive operations? Where were the collectors, and the active corps of advocates and helpers? The answer is—Dr. Coke. It was he who traversed the country, and begged from door to door that the famishing nations might not want the bread of life. It was he who, after devoting to the enterprise his own ample fortune and untiring energies, willingly devoted himself to what he playfully termed "the vile and glorious drudgery of begging," and thus raised tens of thousands of pounds.

Dr. Coke embodied in himself the missionary enterprise of Methodism. Some earnest admirer of the great man has wisely remarked, that if the nineteenth century school of historical criticism could revive in the thirty-ninth century, this man of

prodigious labours, followed to his rest by such stupendous results, he would be considered an unsubstantial myth.

The Ministers and laymen of the Leeds district reflected that Dr. Coke could not live for ever. They saw that this vast and growing system must have an organization and they set about its formation, and the inaugural meetings were held in Leeds, in the old

Boggard House Chapel.

When Pyrrhus demanded of Cineas, on his return from an espionage under cover of an embassage to the Roman Senate, what the world-claiming barbarians were like, he answered:—"Their place of meeting is a temple, and they are an assembly of kings." This striking reply correctly portrays Methodism's first missionary meeting:—"Their place of meeting was a temple, and they were an assembly of kings."

The place of meeting, Boggard House Chapel. The old sanctuary richly deserved the honour. There, forty-four years earlier, Pilmoor and Boardman had volunteered as missionaries, there Methodism's first Missionary collection was made.

"An assembly of kings." There were giants in those days, and those giants were in solemn conclave in the temple. Mighty men: Jabez Bunting, Richard Watson, George Morley, Thomas Jackson, James Wood, Robert Pilter, William Naylor, James Everett, Richard Waddy, "Billy" Dawson, and others. Of this assembly of kings, James Buckley was selected to preach the first sermon in connection with the formation of the Missionary Society.

Mr Buckley married a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Childs, of Llanelly. Her parents were converted to God and to Methodism through the preaching of Wesley, and became liberal and loyal supporters of the Church of their choice. The great Evangelist frequently put his hand on their daughter's head and breathed his benediction of peace, and throughout her life Mrs Buckley exemplified the grace of God, and when the end came she entered home, exclaiming, "Eternity brightens to my view."

Her zealous and devoted husband died a triumphant death on the 24th of August, 1839, in the sixty-seventh year of his age.

The name of Buckley is well-known and greatly respected in Carmarthenshire. The grandchildren of the eminent Methodist minister occupy leading positions in Llanelly.

Lady Morgan, the wife of Sir Morgan Morgan, of Cardiff, is a grand-daughter of Mr. Buckley, and the daughter of Joseph Joseph, Esq., J.P., F.A.S., of Brecon, has married one of his grandsons.

Samuel Warren.

Dr. Warren, well-known in Methodism as the Great Agitator, travelled in Brecon in the year 1805. When residing in Edin-

burgh, the degree of L.L.D. was conferred on him by the University of that city.

Dr. Warren's agitation occurred in 1833. The Conference of that year appointed a committee to carry out a project for the training of candidates for the ministry. Dr. Warren was understood to be a warm supporter of the scheme, but when he discovered that his name was not suggested in connection with any of the offices, and that Dr. Bunting was appointed Governor of the Institution, he turned round, declared that he was opposed to the scheme, and attacked it with such relentless vigour that Methodism was convulsed. He proceeded to set up a standard of rebellion against the authority of the Conference, and this led to his suspension. He appealed against the decision of Conference to the Court of Chancery. Sir Charles Wetherell was his counsel, but the Vice-Chancellor—Sir Lancelot Shadwell—upheld the verdict of the Conference, thus giving to the Plan of Pacification a legal status.

Foiled there, the redoubtable Warren sought to retrieve his loss by appealing to the High Court of Chancery, but without success. Lord Lyndhurst, who then presided over the High Court with unrivalled ability, unhesitatingly confirmed the judgment of the Vice-Chancellor. Ultimately the thrice-foiled agitator seceded from Methodism, joined the Established Church, and became Vicar of All Souls, Manchester. He was buried at Withington, and over his grave grow a holly-bush and a thorn!

The partisans of the Doctor amalgamated with the Leeds Seceders of 1825. In 1857 they were joined by the Free Methodists, and are now known as the United Methodist Free Church.

Less than two years after Dr. Warren left Brecon, his illustrious son, Samuel, was born. For several years he was Recorder of Hull, and afterwards Master in Lunacy, but he is better known as the author of two remarkable and very popular works of fiction,—"Diary of a Late Physician," and "Ten Thousand a Year."

David Rogers.

This successful minister, who was a native of Garth, in the Vale of Clwyd, braved the storm of the Amalgamation of 1815 in Brecon. (See Chap. V.)

Mr. Rogers was appointed Chairman of the Ruthin District in 1816, and of the Second Welsh District in 1817. Two years later he left the Welsh work, and, after travelling five years in the English work, died at Darlington in 1824.

Edward Anwyl.

The memory of this righteous and noble man is greatly revered in the Principality. His piety was sincere, uniform, and fervent.

Constrained by a zealous concern for his fellow-men, he discharged his duties with great faithfulness and constancy for forty-nine years, during sixteen of which he honourably held the office of Chairman of the North Wales District. It is stated that in his gospel ministrations he walked considerably more than one hundred thousand miles, and that he was proverbially known as an eloquent and impressive Welsh preacher.

Mr. Anwyl, who was a native of Llanegryn, finished his long and influential course at Holywell, on the 23rd of January, 1857, in his seventieth year. His well-spent life ended triumphantly. A few minutes before the end came he exclaimed, "Oh! it is worth dying thus, to experience the everlasting arms of God underneath me, supporting me," and two or three seconds before he expired he said, "It is all bright and light."

Dr. James Dixon.

James Dixon, D.D., was born in Castle Donington in 1788, laboured in Brecon in 1815, and died at Bradford December 28th, 1871. In 1812 he entered the ministry, and for more than fifty years discharged the duties of a Christian minister with conspicuous success. He consecrated to the service of the gospel a vigorous mind, in the constitution of which the finest qualities were blended. His reasoning power was great, his fancy was rich, and his faculty for utterance ready and copious beyond that of most men. In due time he became one of the most able preachers of the day, and on the platform he was extraordinarily effective. Dr. Dixon served the connexion in many ways, and was ever in the forefront of its great enterprises. In 1841 he was elected President of the Conference, and his year of office was highly honourable to him. Seven years later he represented British Methodism in the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of America. Towards the end of his course he was smitten with blindness, but his mind retained its vigour to the last. The Methodist Church will ever rank him among her foremost men.

Hugh Hughes.

The great Apostle of the Circumcision was brought to Jesus Christ through the instrumentality of his brother Andrew. Inferior to his brother in those qualifications which are necessary to lead in public life and to shine in the ministry of the Christian Church, Andrew, though he faithfully prosecuted his sacred mission and shared the common perils of his brethren, never attained to a position of distinction and pre-eminence; but he rendered religion a grand service when he sought his brother Peter, and revealed to him his newly-found satisfaction. "We

have found the Messias." "Men live in deeds." Andrew's one deed entitles him to immortality, "And he brought him to Jesus."

Hugh Hughes, who for forty-eight years rendered valuable service to Methodism, and whose name is honoured and revered in our Church, was brought to Jesus by his brother Robert in the year 1805. Two years later the Master entrusted him with his life-work, the duties of which were discharged faithfully and firmly. Mr. Hughes possessed talents of no mean order, which were unreservedly devoted to the service of God. His public

HUGH HUGHES.

discourses, always richly imbued with evangelical truth, were delivered with great earnestness and power, and were generally attended by divine and saving unction. The liberality and friendliness of his disposition, together with a transparent purity of motives and a stedfast integrity of purpose, won for him the esteem and admiration of all who knew him. For fourteen years he was Chairman of the South Wales District, and in 1834 he was elected into the Legal Hundred, an honour never before conferred on a Welsh minister.

He travelled twice in Brecon. Once in 1812-1813, when Lot Hughes was his colleague, and again in 1831-1833. During his first term in the Circuit, the cause at Pwllgloew was commenced, and the chapel erected and opened before he left. The beginning

of his earlier ministry in the Circuit was darkened by Watti Lloyd's betrayal of trust at Devynnock, and the close of it by the indiscreet opposition of the Brecon trustees to the Amalgamation scheme. Lock Methodism is the fruit of his second sojourn.

In the year 1814 Mr. Hughes married the daughter of Mr. John Price, of Pantycored, near Garthbrengy, Brecon, and these two names, Price Hughes, are well-known in England to-day. The Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, M.A., the popular Wesleyan minister, of the West End Mission, London, and Miss E. Price Hughes, the lady who a few years since occupied a distinguished position in the Cambridge University examination, and is now a member of the Council of the Aberystwith University College, and Principal of a Training College at Cambridge, are the grandchildren of this venerable and honoured minister of Christ. The latter days of his life were spent at Carmarthen, where his son, Dr. John Hughes, resides. Full of days, full of honour, and full of peace, this man, greatly beloved, went home to God on the 17th of December, 1855.

Isaac Jenkins.

Mr. Jenkins, whose memory is fragrant in Brecon, and whose remains lie at Devynnock, married the eldest daughter of the Rev. Hugh Hughes.

This amiable and affectionate minister was a native of Ystumtuen. In early life he was surrounded by the inestimable blessings of religious influences, and the devoutness and heavenly-mindedness of a pious father were reproduced in his ministry and conversation. Dr. Rees, of Swansea, says of him:—"He was an able expositor of God's Holy Word, and a useful minister of the New Testament." Beautiful testimony. Who would covet a higher distinction? Dr. Rees's portraiture faithfully describes the friend he admired and esteemed.

Wesley's elaborate ecclesiastical organization requires more than brilliant oratorical powers and fidelity to pastoral work in its leading ministers. Administrative abilities are essential. Mr. Jenkins possessed these, and for three-and-twenty years they were called into requisition in the important posts of Financial Secretary, and afterwards Chairman of the South Wales District.

He finished his earthly course at Merthyr Tydvil on the 25th of August, 1877, in the sixty-fifth year of his age.

Edwin Thorley.

The Minutes of Conference for 1872 contain obituary notices of several eminent ministers in Methodism, among which are those of Thomas Vasey, Benjamin Frankland, Elijah Hoole,

James Dixon, and Edwin Thorley. · Also touching records of the life and labours of less-known ministers. Among these names are those of three ministers who were greatly respected and revered during their sojourn in Brecon; John Morgan and James Stott, "like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season," came to the grave in a full age. The third, George S. Stoker, fell in the strength of early manhood.

Edwin Thorley's memory is fragrant in our Circuit. His sermons, which were plain, pointed, and richly evangelical, and delivered with great earnestness, and often accompanied by much power, are well and gratefully remembered. As a pastor, he was highly esteemed, being exemplary in visitation, especially of the sick and the afflicted, the lukewarm, and those who were "out of the way." Possessing conversational talents which strikingly qualified him for usefulness in this sphere of duty, he was the means of blessing to many. As Chairman of a District he proved himself competent and faithful, and gained the esteem and confidence of both ministers and people; his courtesy, gentleness, kindness of disposition, and saintliness of character, won for him the respect and affection of all classes. By the Conference of 1871 he was appointed to Llanelly. Early in December of 1871 he was seized with typhoid fever. His sufferings were often severe, but he was abundantly sustained, and manifested patient and complete submission to the will of God. On the 6th of January, 1872, this noble servant of Christ entered into the joy of his Lord. The name of Edwin Thorley is inseparably associated with the building of the Dr. Coke Memorial Schools in Brecon.

From the noble service which the great Cloud of Witnesses rendered the Church of God in the Circuit, we must turn for a moment to the life and labours of a very eminent living minister who forty-one years ago commenced his brilliant and successful career in Brecon—

The Rev. Richard Roberts.

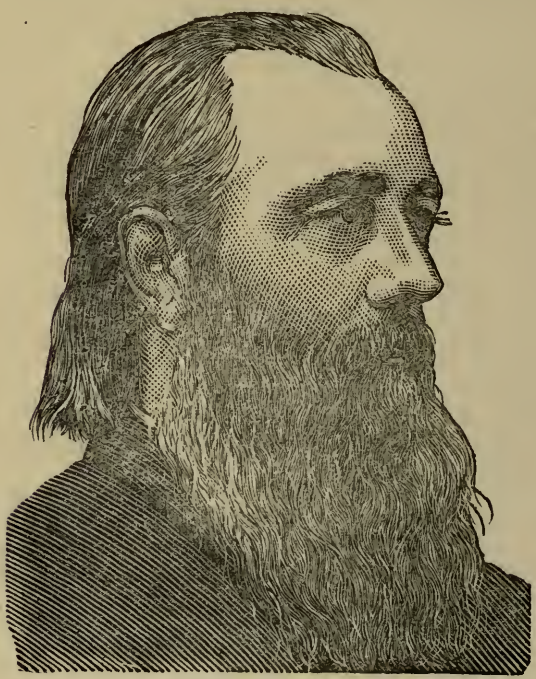
In September, 1847, when the Rev. Joseph Pratten was stationed in the Circuit, Mr. Roberts succeeded the Rev. W. Worker at Hay. He is a native of Machynlleth, where he was born in May, 1823. At an early age he entered a great commercial house in Manchester.

He assayed to preach his first sermon to a few Welsh people in a cottage in Salford, when about sixteen years of age. The boy-preacher's fame spread throughout all the Churches, and his services were in requisition among his kindred far and near.

When the venerable Hugh Hughes presided for the last time at a District Meeting, Mr. Roberts was a candidate for the ministry. That year he entered Didsbury College, and had among his

fellow-students several men who in after years occupied foremost positions in Methodism. His ministry dates from 1845, a year which has furnished more presidents than any other, all of whom are among the most distinguished occupants of Wesley's Chair—Dr. Morley Punshon, Dr. Gervase Smith, Dr. Rigg, E. E. Jenkins, M.A., Thomas M'Cullagh, and Richard Roberts.

His early ministry in Brecon gave abundant promise of the remarkable pulpit power and popularity which have distinguished



RICHARD ROBERTS.

his long career. A few venerable Methodists among us who well remember the "young man from College" coming to the Circuit, say that his superior gifts, aided by quick sensibilities, exuberant fancy, richly evangelical sentiment, lucid style, well-modulated voice, pathetic and powerful eloquence with abundance of Welsh fire, and frank, manly, and affable disposition, prophesied great things.

Morley Punshon and Richard Roberts were the rising young men of Methodism then. Their rare physical and mental endowments and aptitudes marked them for special work. Morley

Punshon fell in manhood's strength, mourned and lamented, "A prince and a great man in Israel." Mr. Roberts remains. May his eventide be bright and cloudless!

Loyalty to Methodism has characterised his life. Soon after he left Brecon, a nobleman offered him a rich living in the Established Church, which he courteously, but firmly declined.

No living minister, perhaps, has travelled more, or preached at the opening of so many new chapels. To some places he has gone annually for upwards of thirty years, taking up the work laid down by such illustrious men as Dr. Newton and Dr. Beaumont. It is estimated that he has on an average preached three hundred times and travelled twenty thousand miles annually for forty-two years.

His long-continued and valuable services were appropriately recognised in 1885, when he was elected President of the Conference. During his year of office he spent a Sunday at Lion Street Chapel, when he preached the Anniversay Sermons in May, 1886.

To many other ministers special prominence is due, but it would be difficult to single out some without reflecting on equally worthy brethren. The writer therefore thought the fairest principle to adopt was to insert no sketch of a living minister unless Methodism had conferred upon him its highest honour. This rule it is confidently believed will commend itself. Prospective eminence and biographical sketches are doubtless in store for many of them, and honours bestowed by this noble brotherhood in the Christian Church are not to be lightly esteemed.

Wealth, social distinctions, academical success, never receive these honours, they are the rewards of distinguished and God-honoured services.

CHAPTER XVII.

IN MEMORIAM.

Ministers who died in the Circuit.

"Still shines the light of holy lives
Like star-beams over doubt:
Each sainted memory, Christ-like, drives
Some dark possession out."—WHITTIER.

BRECON has not only had the honour of offering the choicest of her sons to our Church, and of enjoying the ministry of men of distinguished abilities and heroic zeal. Another honour has been bestowed on the Circuit. Some of God's warriors have fallen

here. Three of these were veterans, and two in manhood's prime. The aged chieftains retired hither to rest after the heat and the burden of the day. With their matured experience they enriched the spiritual life of our Churches, and the younger warriors' early death, loudly calls upon the young soldiers of the Cross to grasp with manly power the potent sword

"In Heaven's high armoury prepared."

Two of the venerable seers rest in peace in the churchyard at Devynnock; the third in the quiet and secluded cemetery at Hay; and the younger comrades lie in the Brecon Cemetery.

William Davies.

Better known as "Mr. Davies, Bailie." He was a native of Llanfyllin, and one of the earliest fruits of Welsh Methodism in that neighbourhood. In 1809 he entered the ministry, and for forty-five years, conscientiously, and with great acceptance, discharged the high functions of the sacred office. Mr. Davies married the daughter of Walter Williams, junior, and granddaughter of the Squire of Bailie, and of the saintly Watkins of Glanusk.

At the Conference of 1854 he retired from the itinerancy, and settled down as a supernumerary at Bailie, but, with the grace and gentleness of virtuous age, the good old man, honoured and revered, laboured on, ministering unto the Churches up to 1869, when, "like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season," he came to the grave in a full age. (See Devynnock Churchyard, chap. xiii.).

Two of his daughters are married to clergymen of the Church of England—the Rev. J. Wilson Evans, the Vicarage, Bracebridge, Lincoln, who was for several years a Wesleyan local preacher; and the Rev. Edward Stephens, Vicar of Ton-y-'refail, Llantrissant, the son of an earnest Methodist Class-leader at Ystumtuen.

David Jones

Fell in the prime of manhood, at Kensington Cottages, Brecon, on the 12th of September, 1861. He was a native of Llanegryn. His early life was full of promise, and his abilities were far above mediocrity. Intellectual pursuits had a fascination for him, and his pulpit ministrations showed traits of unquestionable excellence, but his sun set early.

Henry Wilcox.

The affable disposition and catholic spirit of this excellent man endeared him to all who knew him. He was born at St. David's. Before reaching his twentieth year, the Master called him to His vineyard, and after spending some years at the Hoxton Theo-

logical Institution, he entered the Welsh ministry in 1837, and continued to labour with acceptance and success for forty years. Endowed with a vigorous mind, which was cultivated by diligent study, he rendered our Church efficient services by his pen, as well as by his public and private ministrations.

Suddenly the Bridegroom appeared, but Henry Wilcox was found ready, and on the 1st of October, 1876, in the sixty-third year of his age, he passed away.

His remains lie by the side of those of his life-long friend, Isaac Jenkins, at Devynnock.

Fletcher Menhinick.

"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace." These words fittingly and faithfully portray this saintly minister, whose earthly career terminated in Brecon on the 3rd of December, 1877, in the forty-first year of his age. Mr. Menhinick was born at Tolrigget, Cornwall. Like his illustrious namesake—Fletcher of Madeley—he was a man of meek and quiet spirit, entirely devoted to the service of God. His ministerial life commenced in 1862, and for fifteen years he was held in high esteem as a pastor, preacher, and friend.

Seized with a fatal disease, he bravely fought to the last against its subtle inroads, and with failing strength discharged his duty,

> Falling warrior—like in harness,
> Never resting from the strife.

His remains were interred in the Brecon Cemetery. A beautiful tablet was erected in memory of the devoted minister in the Lion Street Chapel.

Thomas James Walker.

The Obituary Notice, which was read at the Conference of 1886, contains a brief and accurate sketch of this many-years-afflicted servant of God:—From a very early age he was the subject of religious impressions, and at fourteen years of age, at a public Band Meeting, the Lord spoke peace to his soul. At once he began to work for Christ, as a tract-distributor and Sunday-school teacher. In 1832 he went to live in Brighton, where he was a successful local preacher. From that Circuit he entered the ministry, in which he laboured for thirty-two years.

Mr. Walker was honourable, thorough, and transparent. He was a diligent and devout student of God's Word, and deservedly appreciated as a preacher, his sermons being vigorous both in thought and application. To his colleagues he was ever a sincere friend, and to his younger brethren a judicious counsellor, kind and considerate. After a long and painful illness, he died peacefully at Hay, where for eighteen years he had resided as a supernumerary, on April 13th, 1886.

CHAPTER XVIII.

BRECON'S GIFTS TO METHODISM.

Dr. Thomas Coke.

"The generous feeling, pure and warm,
Which owns the rights of all Divine,—
The pitying heart—the helping arm,—
The prompt self-sacrifice—were thine."—WHITTIER.

SEVERAL ministers who exerted considerable influence in the Methodist Church were either born in or entered the Christian Ministry from this Circuit. John Ruskin, the illustrious art critic, says that "it is better to be nobly remembered than nobly born." These men who brought to the sacred office rare endowments of nature and grace, pulpit talents, and administrative abilities of no mean order, deserve to be, and are nobly remembered.

Dr. Coke, by virtue of the conspicuous position which his name occupies in the Universal Church, claims precedence among his fellow-countrymen in the itinerancy.

If Emerson was correct in saying that the deed is the imprint of the man, Dr. Coke has a fair claim to the envied title of "great"—for, upon the religious life of two worlds he has deeply stamped the impress of his catholic spirit and fervent zeal.

His father, Barthomew Coke, son of the rector of Llanfrynach,* near Brecknock, departed from the traditionary name of the family by omitting the letter "o," and thus transforming Cooke into Coke. The worthy Bartholomew attained a deserved celebrity at Brecknock for his success as an apothecary and medical practitioner. Among his patients were the Gwynnes, of Garth, one of whom became the wife of Charles Wesley, the poet; and years afterwards when Mrs. Wesley was a widow, Dr. Coke, as secretary of the Conference, had the pleasure of communicating to her a liberal offer from that body to provide for her and her family.

* Dr. Etheridge, the biographer of Dr. Coke, says:—"The great-grandfather of Dr. Coke was Henry Cooke, of Wern-chwith, in Radnorshire. His son Edward took holy orders, and became rector of Llanfrynaeh. He was the father of Bartholomew, who married the daughter of Thomas Phillips, Esq., of Trosdre. On the death of the Doctor, the line of the Welsh Cokes became extinct; but his mother's family are still represented by the Philipses of Pontywall, near Talgarth."

Bartholomew was well versed in pharmaceutics.

> He knew the cause of every malady,
> Were it of cold or hot or moist or dry,

and turning his knowledge to practical account, he was able to benefit his patients, and retire from business with a well-earned fortune. Devoting the remaining years of his life to the service of the public, his intellectual abilities combined with the benevolent disposition arising from his sterling religious character, secured such rapid promotion that, at the early age of thirty-six, we find him occupying the position of bailiff, or mayor of the town. The following year, in 1738, he was elected alderman, bailiff in 1758, alderman 1759-61, and justice of the peace 1768. His wife Anne, a daughter of Thomas Phillips, Esq., of Trosdre, Brecknockshire, was a worthy help-meet to him. They lived happily together, and only one dark cloud drifted across the horizon. They had been called upon to follow to the grave their only children—Bartholomew and John; and they feared that, in their old age, no children's voices would gladden their home. This fear was effectually disposed of on the 9th of October, 1747, when the worthy wife presented her happy husband with a welcome pledge of affection. Not even the keen eyes of the clever apothecary could recognize in the tiny mortal the future missionary-martyr; but with patriarchal faith, the father and mother soon "gave their idol back to God."

The little pilgrim of love received the name of Thomas. He is described as a dark-haired child, low in stature, but bright and beautiful in aspect. His youth was spent in Brecknock, amid scenes well calculated to foster the studious bent of his mind. The cloud-capped mountains looked down into the busy streets of the little borough; and on market days, the voices of the throng wafted on the air soon blended with the ripple of the river, the sighing of the wind through the forest, and the gladsome strains of nature's choristers—the feathered tribe. Until his fifteenth year young Coke was educated at Christ College, and in the hours of recreation might have been seen wandering along the banks of the Usk or Honddu with book in hand; or, seated in the Priory Groves, speculating with boyish curiosity what the future had in store for him.

The lad soon exchanged the quiet beauties of a country town for the more imposing attractions of a cathedral city, and in his sixteenth year was duly entered as a gentleman commoner at Jesus College, Oxford.

The universities being little better than hotbeds of vice and immorality, Thomas succumbed to the temptations that beset his university career, and imbibed infidel principles which unhappily were strengthened by his tutor.

"Nothing is far from God." Restraining influences which

the young student could not shake off, arrested his downward career. With reflection came regret for the past, earnest prayer for pardon, and resolutions of amendment. The song book was exchanged for the works of divines; and when he concluded his studies at Oxford by taking his Bachelor's degree on February 4th, 1768, he returned to Brecknock an earnest, thoughtful man.

Mr. Coke's personal appearance combined with his ample fortune, excellent education, and other advantages, contributed to make him a general favourite. Soon after attaining his majority, he was elected Mayor of Brecknock: and in the old rate-book of the borough, there are several official entries in his handwriting for the years 1770 and 1771. After spending three pleasant and useful years at Brecknock, he was ordained a deacon of the Church of England in 1770, and three days afterwards became Master of Arts. He was examined for priest's orders at Abergwilli, and ordained on August 23rd, 1772. The parish of Road, in Somersetshire, was the scene of Mr. Coke's first curacy. Transferred from thence to South Petherton, the religious doubts and aspirations that had weighed so heavily upon the young curate's heart, made him gladly accept the proffered counsel of the Rev. Thomas Maxfield, then a clergyman of the Established Church, but who, having been the first of the lay ministry of early Methodism, still possessed a burning zeal for souls. Soon the news spread that "the parson was converted!"

Dr. Coke's earnest preaching resulted finally in his rector's dismissing him at a moment's notice; and as the desponding curate passed out of the door of the church for the last time, the bells pealed forth the triumph of his persecutors. They were soon ashamed of the cruel victory, and a few years later when, as a Methodist preacher, Dr. Coke re-visited South Petherton, the bells which had chimed him out gave him a hearty peal of welcome.

Driven out of the Establishment, Dr. Coke communicated with Mr. Wesley, and after a probationary period of service, entered the Methodist ministry in his thirtieth year. His energy and ability relieved Mr. Wesley of much labour in corresponding and attending to circuit matters, while, in the open-air at London, the Doctor attired in gown and cassock, preached to listening thousands. In subsequent village preaching he received a baptism —not of fire, but of water: when preaching in an open square at Ramsbury, the fire-engine, by order of the vicar, played upon both preacher and people. The little Doctor's Welsh blood was soon up, and he prophesied that Providence would soon require the water to be used for other purposes. A fortnight later a fire broke out, which destroyed nearly all the houses in the square.

In 1782, Dr. Coke visited Ireland, and presided over the first Irish Conference. Two years later his judicial abilities were of great service to Mr. Wesley in drawing up the famous "Deed of

Declaration," an instrument which defined the title of "the Conference of the people called Methodists." This was enrolled in Chancery.

In 1767 the first American Methodist Chapel in New York was built by some British emigrants. Subsequently regular ministers were sent out from England to aid the Methodist work.

The American Revolution, by dissolving all union with the Established Church of England, completed the separation of American Methodism from the Established Church. Yielding to the wish of Mr. Wesley, Dr. Coke allowed himself to be consecrated a bishop, though nominally entitled a joint superintendent with Mr. Francis Asbury over the brethren in North America.

Accompanied by two elders, Whatcoat and Vasey, the missionary set sail for New York, where he arrived November 3rd, 1784, and met with a hearty welcome throughout an extensive official tour in America. It is a noteworthy fact Dr. Coke was the first Protestant Bishop of the New World. The new Bishop greatly assisted the consolidation of American Methodism, and one of the first fruits of his labour was the noble edifice of Cokesbury College. In conjunction with his brother-Bishop Asbury he had an amicable interview with General Washington upon the subject of slavery.

Leaving America in June, 1785, Dr. Coke returned to England, and after arousing public interest in the cause of missions, sailed again, a year later, to the New World. A fearful storm arose, caused, according to the captain's opinion, by the "Methodist Jonah" on board. And on the Feast of Nativity, the ship, driven far out of her course, anchored at Antigua, in the West Indies. Here the Doctor and his ministerial brethren met with great kindness, and upon one occasion dined with Prince William Henry, afterwards William IV.

After preaching in several islands, and establishing the Methodist cause, already in existence at Antigua, on a more satisfactory basis, the Doctor set sail for Charleston on February 10th. Upon reaching America his itinerary labours were recommenced with persistent vigour, and in conjunction with Bishop Asbury, he rode three hundred miles a week, preaching alternately every day. Three months later the indefatigable worker returned to England, and visited the Channel Islands in company with Mr. Wesley. The year was spent in preaching in various parts of the kingdom, assisting the Founder of Methodism in the transaction of connexional business, and collecting for the missions. To aid this last mentioned work, Dr. Coke actually begged from door to door. In this manner, during his life, he spent thousands of hours and collected tens of thousands of pounds, and even the zealous John Wesley remarked, "The doctor is too warm." But the missionary fires never burned brighter than when they were fed by *Coke!*

On the third voyage out missions were established at Barbadoes and St. Vincent. Jamaica was also visited, and afterwards the indefatigable worker embarked for America, where his former labours were continued.

On returning to England, the Doctor visited the scenes of his childhood and the graves of his father and mother at Brecknock. In the old Town Hall at Brecknock he preached a missionary sermon to a crowded congregation.

On one of his visits to Brecknock, a humourous incident occurred, which we have not seen recorded. On the occasion referred to, Dr. Coke was the guest of Squire Meredith, a gentleman who lived in the house now occupied by Ald. H. C. Rich, J.P., in the Watton. The Doctor was about leaving to go to the Town Church, where he had a preaching engagement. His appearance, however, in gown and cassock, alarmed the suspicions of the house dog, Lion, who, very unceremoniously, prepared to make an attack on the Doctor's calves. Dr. Coke was anxious to argue the question, but there was such an amount of logic rolled up in Lion's growl that, for once, the learned divine turned his back on the path of duty, and precipitately sought shelter in a wood shed, which then adjoined the public street. The late Miss Matthews, who lived opposite, hearing an appealing voice calling "Miss, Miss!" crossed to the shed, through the trellis work of which she saw the imprisoned doctor. He meekly explained his situation, and besought her protection from the enemy. Assistance was promptly rendered, and soon the anxious doctor, whose cassock was literally saturated with the perspiration which had poured down his face in his fright, hurried away to his preaching appointment. What a scene!—the missionary hero who faced a thousand dangers, meekly invoking the protection of a maiden lady!

The first Methodist Missionary Committee was formed about this time, with Dr. Coke as its leading spirit. A fourth voyage abroad was commenced October 16th, 1790, when the West Indies were visited. In sailing for Charleston the Doctor was shipwrecked off Edisto, but reached land without injury.

The news of Wesley's death necessitated a hasty return to England, when, at the request of Conference, Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore became the joint authors of a life of Mr. Wesley. The French Revolution appearing to open a door for Protestant work in France, the Doctor visited Paris, and endeavoured to organize a mission there. Receiving a polite hint that if he did not take his departure in peace he would be hanged to a lamp post, he returned to England, and worked more vigorously than ever. In October, 1792, Dr. Coke attended the American Conference, and after returning to England, endeavoured unsuccessfully to found missionary colonies at Eustatius and Sierra Leone.

Leaving England on August 6th, 1796, Dr. Coke sailed for

Baltimore, where he presided at the General Conference.

A year later found him attending the Irish Conference, and afterwards presiding at the English Conference. Immediately afterwards Dr. Coke again sailed for America, but soon found himself a prisoner of war on board a French Privateer. He was, however, speedily released and reached America.

In 1798, notwithstanding the Irish insurrection, the Conference met at Dublin, when Dr. Coke presided. A few months later the Doctor drew up a plan for the comprehension of Methodism as such within the fold of the Established Church, but the Bishop of London declined to sanction the scheme. Leaving the ideal for the practical, Dr. Coke at once visited Ireland, and organized a native mission, which is still in existence. Other visits to the West Indies and to the American General Conference were followed, on his return home, by the inauguration of a mission to the Welsh speaking population of the Principality. A valuable commentary was published, the result of nine years patient toil in leisure hours. He was the first to establish Sunday-schools in Cornwall. In 1803 the intrepid missionary visited America for the last time.

Dr. Coke was twice married, first to Miss Penelope Goulding Smith, and after her death to Miss Ann Loxdale, who a year later was removed from him by death. In both cases the union was all that could be desired.

The appointment of Secretary to the Conference was one frequently held by Dr. Coke. When elected President for the second time, in 1805, he inaugurated a Home Mission for England, helped to send a missionary to Gibraltar, and introduced Gospel preaching among the thousands of prisoners of war then confined in English prison-ships. In 1808 he inaugurated Methodist mission work in Africa.

The final grand design of Dr. Coke's life was to evangelize India, and the English Conference after much opposition accepted his magnificent offer to devote his own services and to spend £6,000 in establishing a mission at Ceylon.

The veteran preacher delivered his farewell and final sermon in England at Portsea, from the same text as he had selected on his visit to Brecknock—"Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God." His last voyage was commenced on December 29th, 1813, when he had already crossed the Atlantic eighteen times. His fellow-missionaries accompanied him in the *Cabalva*. In study and in exercising spiritual influence on the passengers and crew did the earnest worker redeem the time, which was so rapidly drawing to a close.

On the second of May the Doctor retired to his cabin, and, feeling unwell, he remarked to a brother missionary that night, "I shall be better to-morrow." The words were prophetic. For on the following morning, ere anxious friends had entered

his cabin, there came to the tired missionary the rest that remaineth for the people of God. That evening a solemn funeral service was conducted on board the ship, and as, amidst the tears of the mourners, the body was committed to its ocean grave,

> The glories of sunset deepened,
> The highway by angels trod—
> Which seemed to unbar the city
> Whose builder and maker was God.

An excellent education developed the social qualities and splendid abilities with which nature had gifted Dr. Coke. These advantages were of great assistance in carrying on the objects for which he sacrificed his life ; but the manner in which his schemes were constantly over-ruled and directed, shewed clearly that the hand of Providence was guiding him along the path to success. His biographies, from which this account has been compiled, form a history of gospel triumphs abroad and at home. The story of his life—a veritable romance of religion—may be summarized in two lines of the poet :—

> I slept, and dreamt that life was beauty ;
> I woke, and found that life was duty.

But, with Dr. Coke, the sense of duty sprang from a love to the Saviour so intense, that difficulties and dangers, and death itself, were things he could not fear. No man could serve with greater loyalty the Master whom he loved, and when his work on earth was done, the Master said of it " Well done ! " *

American Methodism.

Reference has been made in the foregoing sketch to Dr. Coke's relation to American Methodism. A brief statement of the rise and progress of the great Episcopal Church in the New World might not unfittingly conclude our notice of this indomitable pioneer missionary.

In the reign of Queen Anne, a colony of Germans from the Palatine, on the Rhine, settled in Court Mattress, Ireland. Freed from the sacred restraints of Lutheranism, they became noted for drunkenness, profanity, and an utter contempt of religion. But Luther's God forsook them not. A Methodist itinerant preacher attacked sin's stronghold at Court Mattress. Marvellous were the results; the reformed Germans erected a spacious sanctuary, and the tidings of the "great grace which rested upon all" spread far and near, and by-and-bye the great Evangelist himself found time to visit the settlement.

* This admirable sketch of Dr. Coke is an abridgment from Poole's *History and Biography of Brecknockshire.* The original and abridged narratives were supplied by the writer's esteemed friend, Mr. D. J. Thomas, Castle Street, Brecon, whose valuable assistance and advice have been of much service in the production of the work.

But even the keen and far-seeing Wesley never dreamt how prominent a part these humble German colonists were destined to play in the progress of Christianity.

Philip Embury and Barbara Heck.

During a visit to Court Mattress, in 1752, Wesley formed the acquaintance of one of them. Soon after this visit, Wesley's new acquaintance was licensed to preach among his fellow-countrymen. Fourteen years later (1766) he emigrated to New York. The story of Court Mattress was repeated. Strangers in a strange land, deprived of the religious opportunities and aid which Methodism had afforded them, they lost their zeal and faith. One evening, a party of them were playing cards, when a devout woman, who had just arrived from Ballygarrane, entered the room. Unfeigned was her surprise, and with holy indignation she severely reproved them; then turning to the quondam local preacher, reminded him of his sacred office, and commanded him to resume his labours. Philip Embury's conscience aided Barbara Heck's faithful reproof. He forthwith opened his cottage—a humble one-storey building—for divine worship, and there the first Methodist Society in America was formed. Two years later he dedicated the first American Methodist Chapel,* and thus founded that form of Methodism which was destined to become, within the life-time of many then living, the predominant Protestant belief of the New World.

Sixteen years subsequent to the opening of the Church, Wesley to the horror and amazement of many earnest Churchmen ordained Dr. Coke first Bishop of America.

To-day, one hundred and twenty-two years after Barbara Heck's courageous remonstrance, one hundred and four years after Wesley's daring contravention of ecclesiastical precedents, what do we see? Unquestionably the grandest Protestant Church of Christendom.

Progress of American Methodism.

The *Methodist Times* for April 12th, 1888, published the following statistics:—"The Methodist Episcopal Church has now a membership of 2,200,000; ministers, 14,000; and 14,000 local preachers. The total membership of the several branches of the Methodist Church in the United States exceeds 4,000,000. The

* In 1881 two members of the Brecon Wesleyan Society, when on a visit to New York, saw, in the First Methodist Episcopal Church, a tablet erected in memory of Philip Embury and Barbara Heck. The inscription on it states, that, "Through their labours, the First Methodist Church was erected on *this spot*"; and in one of the class-rooms of the same church they saw the eight-day clock which Wesley presented to the trustees, "ticking away as vigorously as ever." On its face are the words: "Redeeming the time"—"Rejoicing in Hope."

grand total of the Methodist population in the States exceeds sixteen million. The following statements, officially made, will be noted with interest:—

METHODIST MEMBERSHIP COMPARED WITH THE POPULATION.

The population of United States at the first census, 1790, was	3,929,214
The last United States census in 1880 returned a total of ..	50,155,783
Increase in population in 90 years	46,226,569
Increase per cent. in population in 90 years	1,177
Total Methodist Members in United States in 1790	57,904
Total Methodist Members in United States in 1880 (exclusive of the United Brethren, Foreign Missions, etc.)	3,192,525
Total Increase of Methodist Members in 90 years	3,134,621
Increase per cent of Methodist Members in 90 years..	5,413

These figures show that the numerical progress of actual Methodist Membership in the United States during the period between the first and last census, and reaching through the entire period in which exact comparison is possible, has been *nearly five times as great as that of the population.*"

Thus has God blessed the humble services of Philip Embury and Barbara Heck, and Brecon influence was brought to bear early on American Methodism. Joseph Pilmoor, a man of great intellectual force, fine moral sensibilities, earnest, affable, and warmly affectionate, who travelled in the Wales Circuit for two years, 1767-8, and often preached in the Watton Chapel, was the first missionary appointed to America. From Wales Circuit Pilmoor, accompanied by Richard Boardman, from The Dales, crossed the Atlantic, and became the first minister of the Church in the New World.

Thomas Coke, of Brecon, was in 1784 ordained first Bishop of the American Methodist Episcopal Church. Sixteen years later, Richard Whatcoat, another Brecon minister, was ordained to the Episcopacy.

We have traced the leading incidents in the life of Dr. Coke, but how inadequate the sketch! Who can convey a faitful portraiture of this noble, generous, and dauntless missionary? His fellow-townsmen have never seen their way to erect a lofty statue in honour of him; nor does even a single street in the borough bear his name. Were he a victorious general, massive sculptured marble would doubtless adorn some prominent spot in our town; but the achievements of his life, incomparably grander than the achievements of Waterloo, perpetuate his fame. A greater than he rejoiced that churches, which had risen into being by the benediction of heaven on his labours, were his monuments: "Ye are our Epistle." Heathendom rejoicing in a Saviour's love is the memorial of Coke's apostleship.

What Gregory Nazianzen writes of the holy Bazil, may be as truly affirmed of him:—"Each converted sinner is his historian, each sheltered outcast his biographer."

Brecon's deathless glory is "This man was born there."

CHAPTER XIX.

BRECON'S GIFTS TO METHODISM (continued).

"The priestly brotherhood, devout, sincere,
From mean self-interest and ambition clear,
Their hope in Heaven."—COWPER.

John Prickard.

THIS worthy man's name was mentioned in the history of the Watton Chapel. A remarkably interesting sketch of his life and labours appeared in "The Lives of Early Methodist Preachers."

This disciple of Howel Harris and John Watkins, Glanusk, was a native of New Mote, Pembrokeshire; Whitfield and Howell Davies frequently crossed his path in his earlier years. When seventeen years old—in 1761—he came to reside in Brecon. His uncle, he describes as "a Churchman who disliked the Methodists, thinking it sufficient to go to Church twice on Sundays"; but, to the honour of this conscientious Churchman, and as a reproof to prejudiced so-called Christians, the nephew's words deserve to be recorded—"But he laid no restraint on me: I might go and hear the Methodists if I chose."

For six or seven years evil companionship almost eradicated the influence of Whitfield and Davies's powerful preaching, but Divine love did not abandon John Prickard. Sunday, September 30th, 1767, the great crisis of his life occurred. On that day John Wesley preached in the Old Chapel from the words: "The wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein." Profound was the impression which this sermon made on young Prickard's conscience. At five in the afternoon the great Evangelist preached on the Bulwark to a multitude of people on "He healeth the broken in heart." The wounded, wayfaring Prickard heard that blessed message, but he sought not the Great Physician until Christmas Day, 1768. That day he joined the Methodists. Work was soon found for the young enthusiast, and he became a successful class-leader.

When the great controversy divided the Society, Prickard and his friend, Robert Philips, Penpont, remained loyal to Wesley. In the year 1774, he entered the ministry, and for ten years discharged the onerous duties of his high office with much acceptance. No account of this good man's triumphant death was ever published. In the Minutes of the Conference of 1784, in answer to the usual question, "Who has died this year?" the following brief record may be seen:—"John Prickard, a man thoroughly devoted to God, and an eminent pattern of holiness."

Mr. Atmore says that "he finished his course with inexpressible joy." The missionary spirit burned in Prickard's heart. He offered in 1774 to go to the West Indies, but Wesley thought that there was a greater call for him in Wales, and accordingly appointed him to the Glamorganshire Circuit. In 1780 he was appointed superintendent of Brecon Circuit.

JOHN WESLEY.

Prickard's brief reference to Howel Harris deserves to be made universally known, inasmuch as it faithfully portrays the heroic and saintly Apostle of Wales . . . "The summer following I lost a good friend, Mr. Howel Harris; he had often given me good advice. I went to see him about nine days before he died. I shall never forget his parting words to me and another young

preacher :—'My dear young men,' said he, 'wherever you are, take care to maintain that the only reason why all are not saved is that which the Saviour has given—'They will not come unto Me, that they may have life.'"

May the ambassadors of Jehovah ever remember the dying command of the great Apostle of Trevecca!

William Church.

John Prickard says:—"About this time (1774) Mr. Church began to preach." This Mr. Church was William, the younger brother of John Church, of Ffrwdgrech. A license to preach was granted him by the Brecknock Quarter Sessions. This document, which was signed by "J. Wilkins, Clerk of the Peace," and which certified that the applicant had taken the Oath of Allegiance and subscribed to the Declaration against Popery, was deposited a few years ago in the Museum at the Wesleyan Mission House, London, by his grandson, the Rev. Henry L. Church.

William Church was reputed an excellent Welsh scholar and a very proficient musician. For many years he was invited by the committee of the Welsh Charity Schools to act as choirmaster at the famous anniversary services in St. Martin's Church, Trafalgar Square, London, at which the sermons were preached by the Welsh Bishops.

He was on intimate terms with the Rev. John Newton, the saintly rector of Woolnoth, and the godly Earl Dartmouth.

After spending fourteen years as an itinerant minister, he retired in 1790, and from that time to the end of his life in 1830 resided at Deptford, in Kent. A few months after his retirement his wife died, and was buried in Llanfaes churchyard, Brecon. The following epitaph is inscribed on her tombstone, which is in the corner of the burial ground, close to the toll-bar:

In memory of Elizabeth, wife of Willlam Church, late of this parish, who died January 6th, 1791. Aged 42 years.

The best of wives, and a mother dear,
A sincere Christian and a friend is here.
Death can't disjoin what Christ hath joined in love,
Life leads to death, and death to life above.

Mr. Church travelled in the Circuit twice, in 1778 and in 1788-9. He was on very friendly terms with Wesley. During Church's first sojourn in Brecon as a minister, he received the following characteristic letter from the great evangelist, which was addressed: "To Mr. William Church, at Mr. Bold's in Brecon." It may prove of special interest to lady readers:—

Wallingford, October 13, 1778.

Dear Billy,—The soul and the body make a man; the spirit and discipline make a Christian. Let John Watson* and you agree together,

* J. Watson was the Superintendent of the Circuit.

and be exact in this wherever you go. Insist upon the observance of all the Society rules, and on the observance of all, even the least, of the band rules by all who meet in band. I give, for instance, no band tickets to any woman who wears either ruffles or a high crowned cap. If any will not lay aside these rather than lose that blessed means of improvement, she is not worthy of it.

I am, your affectionate brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

The Church family is worthily represented in Methodism to-day. A grandson of the Rev. William Church, the Rev. Henry L. Church, of Upper Norwood, has for many years been one of the leading ministers in the connexion. His father, who was educated in Christ College, removed to London in 1795, and joined the Methodists in City Road chapel, the Cathedral of Methodism, when an illustrious ex-scholar of Christ College superintended the Circuit—the Rev. Dr. Coke. For seventy years he adorned the Christian profession, and at the advanced age of ninety-five finished his course with joy, at Kentish Town in the year 1875.

His son has travelled in some of the most important circuits in Methodism, and for three years he discharged the onerous and exacting duties of the financial secretaryship of the Second London District. In 1876 he was appointed one of the assistant secretaries of the Conference, a post of great honour.

Thus the Church family, which so nobly served and generously supported Methodism in Brecon, has been honourably represented by grandsire and grandson in some of the distinguished positions of the Methodist Church.

John Hughes.

The accomplished author of *Horæ Britannicæ*, was born in Ship street, Brecon, May 18th, 1776. An old inhabitant of the town informed the writer that Hughes was born in the house which stands on the upper (town) corner of Bell lane. His father carried on an extensive business as a hatter in the town for fifty years. His mother was Elizabeth, the daughter of John and Gwenllian Thomas, Tan-y-cefn, near Brecon. One of Mrs. Hughes's brothers was for many years Vicar of Caerleon.

When eleven years of age John was sent to Christ College. The headmaster at that time was the Rev. David Griffiths, an excellent scholar and teacher of repute. Many men who in after years exerted powerful influence in the Methodist Church received their tuition in Christ College during the twenty-five years Mr. Griffiths resided there, among them the Revs. William Church, Thomas Coke, Walter Churchey; probably Hugh Bold, John Hughes, and others. Mr. Griffiths encouraged classical studies, and young Hughes made much progress and became very proficient in Latin and Greek. Hughes's parents

gave their son the best education procurable, hoping that, after a few years in St. Paul's School, London, and a residence in Oxford or Cambridge, he would follow the example of his uncle and enter the ministry of the Established Church. "Man proposeth, God disposeth." The great Head of the Church required his brilliant talents elsewhere. After two years training at Christ College an event occurred which was fraught with far-reaching consequences for him. In the year 1789, his illustrious fellow-townsman, who some years earlier had been such a brilliant

Student at Christ College,

and who had now become known as a pioneer missionary, was spending his third interval in England. From the Conference Dr. Coke proceeded on his usual home-work of preaching from town to town, and begging for the means of sending the Gospel to foreign lands. In the course of these itinerations he came to Brecon. Once more he wandered on the banks of the Honddu; once more he paced in the shady avenues of the Groves, where "deep in the gloom of trees" stood the old Benedictine priory,—living over again the vanished days. Soon a grander and more inspiring vision presented itself: Heathendom yearning for a Redeemer. And in the old Town Hall* the noble missionary, who had traversed the great continent of America, who had established seven mission stations in the West Indies and four in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, preached to a crowded congregation on his all-absorbing theme, "Ethopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God." Young Hughes was in the congregation. The Doctor's forcible arguments, rendered a thousand times more powerful and eloquent by his heroic self-sacrifice, touched the heart of the youthful collegian. What prospects he saw, none can tell. We have heard of the youth Correggio admiring that masterpiece of art, the painting of St. Cecilia: fascinated by its beauty, he cried out, "I, too, will be a painter."

Whether Coke's earnest pleading for Heathendom enkindled missionary zeal in the soul of the young lad, we cannot tell; but of this we are certain, He who said of the scholar of Gamaliel, "He is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bring My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel," placed His hand on him and said,—Thou, too, shalt be a missionary.

A year later, 1790, another Conference meets. Another servant of God sets out on his glorious mission. He, too, visits Brecon, and preaches in the old town hall. The veteran evangelist's theme is not Ethiopia! Not Heathendom in darkness, yearning for the Light of the world, but "Jerusalem in Sin."

* Which stood on the site of the present Town Hall in High street.

If Coke's missionary enthusiasm tempted the young student to traverse the regions beyond, Wesley's pathetic description of the Saviour's lamentation over Jerusalem reminded him of the Master's command to His Apostles—"Beginning at Jerusalem." In the evening, Wesley preached in the Watton Chapel, on the state of the Church at Ephesus. This visit of the great evangelist made a deep impression on the mind of John Hughes. Referring to it in after years, he said, "I well remember Mr. Wesley going from the hall to the chapel, and meeting the Society. He stood at the chapel door and affectionately shook hands with all the members. I was the only young man presented to him on that occasion."

Six months later the career of the venerable and saintly evangelist ended.

Hughes associated himself with the Methodists, and in the year 1796 his name appears as junior minister of the newly-formed Cardiff Circuit. The ex-scholar of Christ College takes his place among the men-despised but God-honoured Methodists. From Cardiff, in 1797, he removed to Haverfordwest; then back in 1798 to Cardiff, and in 1799 to Welshpool, another newly-formed Circuit. At the Conference of 1800, Hughes was appointed to Leek, but God over-ruled this. Dr. Coke hurriedly entered City Road Chapel, and urged the Conference to establish a

Mission for Wales.

Conference consented, and the Revs. Owen Davies, of Wrexham, and John Hughes, of Brecon, were appointed missionaries. (See Methodism in Wales, chap. iv.).

For six years he remained in Wales; in 1806 he went to Dewsbury, and in 1807 to Bristol. In 1808 he returned to the Principality, and, after labouring two more years in the Welsh work, finally went over to the English work, and travelled in some of the most important Circuits in Methodism, until the year 1832, when he retired from the active ministry, and settled down as a supernumerary in Knutsford,* where he departed this life on the 15th of May, 1843, in the sixty-seventh year of his age. During his retirement at Knutsford, he was much pleased with the visits of the Rev. H. L. Church, who was then a student at Didsbury College, and whose father was one of his fellow-students in Christ College.

Literary Productions.

Mr. Hughes was a voluminous and able writer. Reference has already been made to the "Horæ Britannicæ." This work was

* Mr. Hughes had married a lady from Knutsfod, the daughter of Mr Edward Clarke.

published in 1818, in two volumes, by J. and T. Clarke, St. John's Square. The printers were the sons of that eminent Methodist preacher and oriental scholar, Dr. Adam Clarke. The work is a series of studies in Ancient British History.

"Horæ Britannicæ"! Unknown, doubtless, to many students of ecclesiastical history, but who can estimate the power of this work in the religious history of the world? The Rev. Thomas Price, Vicar of Cwmdu, near Crickhowell (better known in the literary world as *Carnhuanawc*), writing to Mrs. Hughes in 1847, ascribes the translation of the Holy Scriptures into the language of Brittany to the influence produced on his mind when reading "Horæ Britannicæ." When preaching before the members of the Brecon Cymmrodorion Society on St. David's Day, 1824, Mr. Price pleaded for a translation of God's Word into that language. A collection was made for that purpose, and Mr. Price communicated with the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, with the result that the services of Le Gonidec, a Breton scholar, were secured, and the work done.

But he accomplished more than this. Dr. Rees says that not the least brilliant gem in the history of Welsh Wesleyan Methodism is the powerful influence it exerted on the religious life of the Principality by the impetus it gave to religious literature. Without doubt, John Hughes was the father of Wesleyan Methodism's Welsh literature! True the Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd made its appearance when Mr. Hughes resided in Bristol, but he had only been absent from Wales about sixteen months, and of the twenty-four ministers then in the Welsh work, the literary achievements of not one of them, with the exception perhaps of Mr. Bryan, would warrant the opinion that Hughes was not the originator of the idea of a Welsh magazine! As early as the year 1802 he published a sermon of Charles Wesley in Welsh; in 1804, he translated and published one of John Wesley's tracts. Other works appeared in 1802 and 1804.

If this conjecture is correct, what a mighty influence Brecon has exerted in Methodist literature! Walter Churchey, the father of Methodism's English Magazine, and John Hughes of its Welsh Magazine!

As far as can be ascertained, the following works were published by Mr. Hughes:—

1. The Rules of the Wesleyan Methodist Society, 1802.
2. Welsh Hymn-book, 1802. Second Edition, 1804.
3. Theory of Divine Providence (by Wesley), 1804.
4. Universal Redemption, 1811.
5. A Plea for Religious Liberty, 1811.
6. Chronicles of the Methodists, &c., 1804.
7. Theological Essays, &c., 1818.
8. An Essay on the Welsh Language, 1822.

9. Horæ Britannicæ.
10. Several Memoirs.
11. Welsh Edition of the Pilgrim's Progress.

He also translated Dr. Coke's Commentary on the Bible into Welsh, and left a number of unpublished works, among them—"Historical Triads," consisting of memorials of remarkable persons and occurrences among the Cymry, &c. The manuscript of this last work was presented by his widow to the Royal Cambrian Institution, and is now deposited in the British Museum." *

The Cymmrodorion Society awarded him several prizes and three silver medals in recognition of his learning; he was elected honorary member of the same society, and on several occasions presided at its gatherings.

Thomas Jones.

This devoted, earnest, and successful minister was Glasbury's first offering to the Methodist ministry. Born just two years before the nameless ambassador stood on the village green, he doubtless, as a babe, witnessed the harsh persecution of that indomitable servant of God. Lawlessness failed to quench the evangelist's dauntless zeal, for Methodism had a great work to accomplish in that neighbourhood. The earliest Methodists of Glasbury were Mrs. Price, Giltwrch, and William Jones, timber merchant. William Jones was the first class-leader, and Thomas Jones was his second son. Like Samuel, Thomas Jones was the son of a pious and God-fearing mother. In early life she dedicated him to God, and before His people said, "I have lent him to the Lord: as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord."

Years passed, but the vow of dedication was not forgotten. "And the child grew before the Lord." God called him to the Christian ministry, and in 1826 he was sent to the Wellington Circuit. During his sojourn there he was assailed by doubts as to his call to preach. Dark days of conflict ensued, gloom and despair troubled him, and so severe was the battle, that the strong young man decided to abandon the sacred work and return home, but God ordained otherwise. The ordeal had accomplished its purpose. The silver had been purified, and deliverance came. A person who had been converted under his ministry met him, and devoutly thanked the Great Head of the Church for his preaching. The ardent disciple immediately accepted this as a favourable omen,—as God's method of meeting his doubts—and with strengthened vigour and profounder conviction, he prosecuted his noble work for fifty-three years. His preaching often produced remarkable results. Great simplicity, gentleness, purity,

* Poole's *History of Brecknockshire.*

and the stamp of true nobility characterised his long and useful career.

In 1867, he retired from the active ministry, and settled down at Lytham, where he died on Sunday, February 28rd, 1879, in the seventy-sixth year of his age.

Throughout his long and honoured life he cherished the memory of his saintly mother.

Lewis Jones.

Four miles above Brecon, in the Honddu valley, is situated the small hamlet of Pwllgloew. Early in this century the Welsh ministers visited the place. Several respectable farmers gladly welcomed them into their houses, and Methodism exerted a beneficent influence in the neighbourhood. Pwllgloew amply repaid the labours bestowed upon it. Many useful and earnest Christians, strong and beautiful in life and death, were the seal of that ministry. Moreover, the Christian Church has reaped a rich harvest from their labours.*

Lewis Jones was one of Pwllgloew's gifts to Methodism. He was born in July, 1811, and lived for many years at Sychbant, near Glanhonddu. His mother was left a widow with a large and young family, consequently her son's early educational advantages were few, but this deficiency was largely compensated by careful and life-long culture. An earnest Methodist—Mr. Morgan Williams, Pantllwyfan—took the fatherless boy in hand, and taught him to read God's Holy Word. Years of self-discipline and self-culture, and the command of the Holy Ghost, prepared him for the ministry, which he entered in 1833, and for forty-five years travelled in some of the most important Circuits in the North Wales District.

When strength failed, he retired to London, and rendered Welsh Methodism in the Metropolis valuable services, until the Master summoned him home on the 28th of July, 1883. He was a man of generous feeling, obliging disposition, deep convictions, firm purpose and strict integrity, and entirely consecrated to his life-work.

In 1839 he married the daughter of the late Rev. Edward Anwyl, who was for many years Chairman of the North Wales District.

James Stewart Thomas.

The picturesque little town of Hay, the scene of Methodism's proto-martyr's triumphant death, has enriched the records of the Church of God. Many devout men and women have lived, laboured, and died there, and their memory remains fragrant.

* See Pwllgloew Chapel, chap. xiv.

Among these, an old Methodist class-leader deserves special mention. For sixty years no man wielded greater power in Hay than the quaint, eccentric, but deeply pious and greatly revered Jonathan Thomas. This power was no accident of birth or of fortune, but the irresistible strength of a Christian character of sterling worth.

Early in this century, when the great Napoleon threatened to invade England, men of all ranks and professions, merchants, lawyers, doctors, farmers, and shopkeepers volunteered their services to defend their island home and their sovereign; 340,000 civilians were equipped with arms, and fortified camps were erected at Chatham, Dover, and Chelmsford.

The contagion of enthusiasm and patriotism affected Jonathan Thomas, and he forthwith exchanged the lapstone and the awl for the rifle and the sword. Marching orders came, and his regiment was sent to Ireland. Ultimately, however, the daring Corsican abandoned his project, the volunteer corps were disbanded, and Jonathan Thomas quitted Ireland, but not alone; he had won the heart and hand of Sarah Stewart, a fair daughter of Erin's Isle.

During these warlike preparations, his father had removed from Gloucestershire to the mill at Llanigon. Thither repaired the ex-soldier and his bride, and after a brief stay removed to a cottage in Oxford Road, Hay, and identified themselves with the Methodist Church. Soon God gladdened their home with a son, whom they consecrated to His service. This son won renown as a successful missionary, and in the year 1856 his name was enrolled among the army of martyrs.

The Missionary Martyr.

James Stewart Thomas was appointed in 1838 to labour among the Kaffirs of Southern Africa. His missionary career promised well; possessing remarkable powers of memory and great faculty in the acquisition of languages, he speedily mastered the difficulties of the Kaffir tongue, and in a comparatively short period was able to speak and preach in it with great ease and fluency. By that means he acquired unrestrained influence with the chiefs and the people, by whom he was held in great respect.

He contributed a share to the translation of the Old Testament into the Kaffir language.

In 1856, he received orders to go to the New Beacham Wood station. At that time a furious war was waging between two hostile tribes. The night after his arrival the missionary station was attacked. He arose and hastened to the scene of conflict to prevent a further effusion of blood, but death met him. An unfriendly hand stabbed him, and he immediately passed the pearly gates. Thus on the 14th of June, 1856, the Eternal King

placed upon the brow of James Stewart Thomas the crown of martyrdom.

. . . . . Martyrs struggle for a brighter prize,
And win it with more pain. Their blood is shed,
In confirmation of the noblest claim,—
Our claim to feed upon immortal truth,
To walk with God, and be divinely free
To soar and to anticipate the skies.
Yet few remember them. They lived unknown
Till persecution dragged them into fame,
And chased them up to heaven. Their ashes flew,
No marble tells us whither. With their names
No bard embalms and sanctifies his song.

No, but the Universal Church in its magnificent Te Deum commemorates the heroic self-sacrifice of "the souls under the altar,"

"The noble army of martyrs, praise Thee."

Proud of his brilliant services to the Church of God, and revering the memory of his sainted parents, the Methodists of Hay purchased the cottage in which their missionary martyr was born, and, on the spot where he was consecrated to God and His cause, erected in 1874 spacious and convenient Sunday-school premises, appropriately called the Thomas Memorial Schools.

Daniel J. Draper.

Brecon claims an interest in this eminent and brave Australian minister, who is universally known as the hero of the *London* Shipwreck. Mr. Draper was a native of Wickham, in Hampshire. His connection with Brecon dated from December, 1833, when he came here to reside with his step-sister, Mrs. Pugh, the Watton. On his arrival, he joined the Church at the Watton Chapel, and the exemplary life, sincere piety, and pulpit power greatly endeared the young stranger to his co-religionists. He possessed a remarkable gift in prayer, and his knowledge of God's Word was extensive and accurate. When special seasons of spiritual quickening were vouchsafed to the Church, the young local preacher was wont to give out, and sing with a zest never to be forgotten, those beautiful words:—

Happy, if with my latest breath,
I may but gasp his name,
Preach Him to all, and cry in death,
Behold, behold the Lamb!

These moments of spiritual elevation were prophetic in their expression. Thirty years later, amid the tragic scenes of the loss of the s.s. *London*, God granted him his heart's desire.

After spending one year in Brecon, Mr. Draper entered the ministry; another year was spent in the home work; then he offered himself and was accepted for the land of the Southern

Cross. His influence on the intellectual and religious life of the colony was powerful and permanent. Australian Methodism readily recognised those distinguished services by conferring on him its highest honours, and when in 1865 a representative was elected to convey the fraternal greetings of the Colonial Church to the British Church, and to represent its culture, pulpit, and platform powers, Mr. Draper was the chosen one.

Accompanied by Mrs. Draper, he reached England in May, 1865, and, after attending the Conference, they came to Brecon, and spent a few happy days amid the associations of his early life. After remaining eight months in our country, they embarked on the 6th of January, 1866, on board the *London*, homeward bound. The story of the loss of that vessel during a tremendous gale which swept over Europe, is unquestionably one of the saddest, and yet perhaps one of the sublimest records of shipwreck.

Shipwrecked in the "London."

When the story of the last hours of the sufferers in the doomed vessel was briefly told, it displayed such a scene of moral grandeur and sublimity, as invested the horrors of the shipwreck with almost a halo of glory. Ceaseless were the efforts of this noble servant of Christ to lead men and women to make their peace with God. Regardless of his own peril, he thought of the safety of others. A few minutes before the vessel went down, one of the survivors saw him, with his eyes filled with tears, which streamed down his face, and heard him, with the clear, distinct voice of a man calm and collected, exhorting all to embrace the Saviour. The vessel sank, and the shipwrecked minister entered the Haven where no storms of earth can reach, exclaiming, "Behold, behold the Lamb."

How strangely, yet how sublimely the prayer was answered?

In Memoriam.

Australia and England bestowed their admiration on the central figure of the awful scene. When the intelligence reached Melbourne, the city became one Bochim, and strong men wept and sobbed like children, it seemed almost as though death had entered every house. Nations mourned this noble ambassador of truth, and many excellent means were adopted to perpetuate the record of his beautiful life and heroic death.

A Draper's Scholarship was founded in Wesley College, Sydney; a beautiful tablet of white statuary marble, with black marble edges and columns, surrounded by carved freestone of Gothic design, was erected in Wesley Church, Sydney; and in Adelaide, a magnificent Draper Memorial Church, a building of

considerable architectural pretensions, having a fine spire, was erected at a cost of £4,000.

England also honoured the memory of this great and good man. A marble tablet was erected in the chapel at Fareham, where he was born of God; and a Draper Life Boat, costing £800, was purchased and equipped. The life-boat, which was the tribute of the Sabbath-schools of our country, is stationed at Mullion, on the coast of Cornwall.

John Rees.

This venerable and venerated minister, who resides (1888) at Pontypridd, introduced Methodism to Llanfrynach, near Brecon. After rendering very efficient and valuable assistance to the Rev. Hugh Hughes, he entered the ministry in 1833, and for fifty-five years the grace of God has been magnified in a life of unassuming but earnest and faithful devotion to his sacred work. The calm, gentle, loving spirit has braved many storms, and now the eventide has come.

David's exquisite delineation of a good man faithfully portrays this loyal minister of Christ: "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree. He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall bring forth fruit in old age."

Seventy-eight years have left their mark on the stalwart man; but—

> The hoary head is a crown of glory,
> The good old man is honoured and revered.
> Not slothful he, though seeming unemploy'd,
> . . . . Stillest streams
> Oft water fairest meadows, and the bird
> That flutters least is longest on the wing.

James Surman Cooke.

The frequent allusions which occur in this sketch to Bailie are pleasant and interesting. Very hallowed Methodist associations cluster around the name; the upright and honoured Williamses resided there for many years, rendering our church in the neighbourhood priceless service; the earnest Chaplain, who found an early grave in a strange land, and the young bride of the Rev. W. Worker were born there, and there the venerable Davies and his saintly wife ended their pilgrimage. Wesley, the peerless evangelist, Coke, the dauntless missionary, and a host of God's servants enjcyed the hospitality of this noble family.

Another link unites Bailie to Wesleyan Methodism. For some years Isaac Cooke, a devoted class-leader and local preacher, lived there, and whilst there his son—James Surman Cooke was born; in March, 1845, Mr. Cooke removed from Bailie to Pentre, Llanspyddid. His son, who entered the ministry in 1866, has

travelled in some of the leading circuits, and has rendered in various departments efficient services to the church of his fathers. He resides at present in Scarborough.

Rev. W. S. Bestall's Missionary Family.

Another link in the chain which binds Brecon with the last labours of Dr. Coke has recently been formed. The Rev. W. S. Bestall, who travelled in this circuit 1868—70, has a son and daughter engaged in mission work at Ceylon—both of whom were members of the Dr. Coke Sunday-School at Brecon. The Rev. W. J. G. Bestall has laboured successfully at Kandy, Ceylon, and Mrs. Trimmer, wife of the Rev. G. J. Trimmer, in another part of the same beautiful island. Another son—the Rev. A. E. Bestall, is a missionary in Burmah, and a third son is a local preacher in Africa.

Robert Hasell Killip.

This young minister, Brecon's latest, but not the last, gift to Methodism, is a Methodist of the third generation. By a strange arrangement of Providence, he was led, in early life, from Bristol to South Petherton, and the scene of Dr. Coke's conversion witnessed the consecration of this young man's life to God. Coke was branded as a Methodist in South Petherton; not so his successor in the Ministry.

In 1881 Mr. Killip came to reside in Glasbury, where he occupied the position of confidential clerk in the firm of Messrs. C. and G. Butcher. During his stay he rendered the Circuit very valuable and acceptable services as a lay preacher, and God frequently honoured his labours with immediate results. In 1882 he was accepted as a candidate for mission work, greatly to the delight of his Superintendent (the Rev. R. Fletcher.)* After spending some years in Richmond and Didsbury Colleges, he was, however, transferred to the home work, and in September, 1886, appointed to the Marlborough Circuit, where he now resides.

His academical career augured auspiciously for a bright future. In October, 1882, he obtained the first place in the Freshmen's Examination at Richmond, and in 1885 obtained the first prize for the Fernley essay on "The Mystical Body of Christ," at Didsbury, and during his probation stood high in the "Honour's List" for three successive years.

* Missionary enthusiasm in the Circuit received an impetus from the pastorate of the Rev. R. Fletcher. He was a godly minister, "who bore the white flower of a blameless life," and had given thirty years labour, and some hundreds of pounds, which had been left him, to the cause of Foreign Missions.

CHAPTER XX.

WESLEY'S VISITS TO BRECON.

"And he saw ere his eye was darkened,
The sheaves of the harvest bringing,
And knew, while his ear yet hearkened,
The voice of the reapers singing."

Wesley first visited Wales in October, 1739. Writing in his Journals, under date Monday, October 15th, he says:—"Upon a pressing invitation, some time since received, I set out for Wales." Who gave this pressing invitation to the great evangelist? Someone who doubtless felt that the Principality stood in need of the arousing ministry of the Methodists.

Unquestionably the most plausible conjecture is, that it was Howel Harris. He had met Wesley on the 18th of June. Prejudice had endeavoured to embitter him against the young clergyman, but when they met, mistrust vanished, and the ardent Welshman said, "He was greatly enlarged in prayer for me, and for all Wales."

The route selected for this visit was Abergavenny, Usk, Pontypool, Newport, and Cardiff. A second visit to these places was paid in April, 1740, a third in October, 1741, and a fourth in March, 1742.

In May, 1743, Breconshire was visited, and the visits to Brecon and the surrounding district will be chronicled in Wesley's own words.

MAY, 1743, Wednesday, 3rd.—Came to Builth. . . Mr. Phillips, the Rector of Maesmynis (at whose invitation I came), soon took knowledge of me. . . . I preached on a tomb at the east end of the Church at four, and again at seven. Mr. Gwynne and Mr. Prothero, Justiees of the Peace, stood on either hand of me.

From Builth he rode to Cardiff on the following day, and preached in the New Room—Methodism's first sanctuary in Wales.

OCTOBER, 1743, Tuesday, 27th.—We came to Mr. Gwynne's at Garth. About four o'clock I read prayers and preached to a small congregation.

APRIL, 1744, Saturday, 21st.—I rode to Garth, and on Sunday preached in the Church there, morning and afternoon. Monday, 23rd.—I preached in Maesmennys Church, and afterwards in the Churchyard at Builth.

Tuesday, 24th.—I preached at Maesmennys again, and about five in Llanthew Church, near Brecknock. Such a church I never saw before. There was not a glass window belonging to it; but only boards, with holes bored here and there, through which a dim light glimmered in. Yet here may the light of God's countenance shine. And it has shone on many hearts.

AUGUST 1745.—Monday 22nd and two following days he preached at Garth, Maesmennys, Builth, and Llanthew.

AUGUST, 1746.—Tuesday, 12th, and several days were spent at Maesmennys, Builth, and Llansantffraid. "On Friday, after taking a sweet leave of the loving people of Maesmennys, we rode with honest John Price, of Mertha, to his house."

AUGUST, 1747.—Wesley called at Garth, *en route* for and from Ireland. On his return journey he visited Builth, Maesmennys, Llansantffraid, and Clyro. At Llansantffraid one of the audience pressed him to preach at Clyro, telling him Mr J. had often said he would be welcomed to his pulpit. He rode thither, and called on Mr. J., but his heart failed, and Wesley preached on a large smooth meadow to a multitude of people, who were gathered from all parts.

FEBRUARY, 1748.—It snowed all night. On Wednesday, 17th, we set out . . . found it bad travelling . . . However, we reached Brecknock before three in the afternoon. Our landlady here almost forced us to take a guide. And it was extremely well she did ; for the snow had so entirely covered the roads, that our guide himself mistook the way more than once. So that if he had not been with us, we should, without doubt, have lodged upon the mountains.

This was the great Evangelist's first visit to Brecon.

FEBRUARY 17th, 1748.—Despite the inclemency of the weather, the indomitable man pursued his course. During this visit he preached at Builth, Garth, Maesmennys, and pushed his way to Holyhead, to cross St. George's Channel for Ireland. Reaching Holyhead on Wednesday 24th, there was no possibility of crossing. "All the ships were on the other side." From that day until the 8th of March John and Charles Wesley traversed Anglesea, preaching the Gospel. At last a vessel sailed, and for ten weeks they laboured in Ireland, and returned to Bristol through Garth and Builth.

APRIL, 1749, Friday, 7th.—Interesting and important is the record of this visit: "We reached Garth. Saturday, 8th, I married my brother and Sarah Gwynne. It was a solemn day, such as became the dignity of a Christian marriage."

MARCH 1750, Tuesday, 21st.—Brecon was again favoured with a visit. Through an intermittent storm, the great apostle passed through our town for Builth. When would Brecon hear from his lips the glad tidings?

Six years passed before another visit was paid to Wales. The sphere of his ministry was rapidly extending, and visits to the earlier scenes of his career became less frequent. Six years passed, and at the expiration of that time he visited Brecon.

THURSDAY, MARCH 18th, 1756.—We rode through hard rain to Brecknock, and came just at the hour appointed for preaching. The Town Hall, in which I was desired to preach, is a large and commodious place; and the whole congregation (one poor gentleman excepted) behaved with seriousness and decency.

On Friday he rode over to Trevecca to see Howel Harris.

Saturday, 20th.—It being the day appointed for the Justices and Commissioners to meet, the town was extremely full; and curiosity (if no better motive) brought most of the gentlemen to the preaching. Such another opportunity could not have been of speaking to all the rich and great of the county; and they all appeared to be serious and attentive.

He preached twice on the Sunday, afterwards proceeding to Trevecca. Here he found that the great Welsh Revivalist had abandoned his itinerancies, and settled down to manage the Great House.

TREFECCA COLLEGE.

Seven and a half years passed before his visit to Brecon was repeated.

AUGUST, 1763.—Thursday, 18th, he arrived in the town. It was the Assize week. Consequently the Town Hall was not available, and he preached at Mr. James's door. The following morning he preached near the market-place, and afterwards rode over to Trevecca. (See chap. xi.). I preached at ten to a crowded audience, and in the evening at Brecknock again; but to the poor only: the rich were otherwise employed.

Saturday, 20th.—We took horse at four, and rode through one of the pleasantest countries in the world. When we came to Trecastle, we had ridden fifty miles in Monmouthshire and Brecknockshire, and I will be bold to say, all England does not afford such a line of fifty miles length, for fields, meadows, woods, brooks, and gently rising mountains, fruitful to the very top. Carmarthenshire, into which we came soon after, has at least as fruitful a soil; but it is not so pleasant, because it has fewer mountains, though abundance of brooks and rivers.

Such was Wesley's impression of the scenery of the Usk Valley—Unrivalled in England.

SEPTEMBER, 1767, Sunday, 30th.—Brecknock. I preached at eight to a large and serious congregation, and on the Bulwark at five. A multitude of people attended; and even the gentry seemed, for the present, almost persuaded to be Christians.

John Prickard heard Wesley on this occasion (see Chap. xix.).

AUGUST, 1769.—The first anniversary of Trevecca College was celebrated. An amazing concourse of people attended, and all the great men of the Revival, with the exception of Charles Wesley and Whitfield, were present. Daniel Rowlands, Williams, Pantycelyn; Howel Harris, John

Fletcher, Walter Shirley, Howell Davies, Peter Williams, and John Wesley took part in the services on that memorable occasion.

The following year the Great Controversy divided the Methodists, but although Wales was the stronghold of Calvinism, the illustrious and noble-minded man rose superior to unworthy jealousy and continued to visit our country.

August, 1771, Wednesday 14th.—Came to the Hay. In the evening I preached in the new, neat preaching-house, to many more than it would contain. The next evening I was constrained to preach abroad.

This was his first visit to the scene of Seward's martyrdom.

August, 1772, Thursday, 13th.—"I preached at the Hay." He also preached at Trevecca; Harris complained to him of the students in these words:—"They preach barefaced Reprobation . . . I have been constrained to oppose them to the face, even in the public congregation." After spending a day or two very comfortably at Brecknock, I rode to Carmarthen.

AUGUST, 1774, Wednesday, 24th.—Rode to Brecknock. In the evening I preached in the Town Hall to most of the gentry in the town. They behaved well, though I used great plainness of speech.

Thursday, 25th. At eleven I preached within the walls of the old Church at the Hay.

During this visit Wesley heard of the strange proceedings of the Jumpers.

AUGUST, 1775, Wednesday, 16th.—Reached the Hay. Being desired to give them one sermon at Trevecca; I turned aside thither, and on Thursday, 17th, preached at eleven to a numerous congregation. What a lovely place! And what a lovely family! still consisting of about six-score persons. So the good man is turned again to his dust! But his thoughts do not perish. (Howel Harris, the Apostle of Wales, had ended his career, and England's greatest Apostle mourns his comrade in arms). I preached at Brecon the next day.

JULY, 1777.—About six in the morning, on Thursday, 10th, I preached on the Bulwarks at Brecon. Friday, 11th, I called upon Mr. Gwynne, just recovering from a dangerous illness. But he is not recovered from the seriousness which it occasioned. May this be a lasting blessing.

April, 1781.—See Wesley at Bailie. Chap. xiii.

AUGUST, 1782, Friday, 13th. In the evening I preached at Brecon, and leaving my brother there, on Saturday, went forward to Carmarthen.

AUGUST, 1784.—This extract affords another illustration of nature's glory in Brecon. Describing some charming spot just outside Monmouth, he says:—"Another walk whose artless shades are not penetrated by the sun. These are full, as beautiful in their kind as the hanging-woods at Brecon.*

Wednesday, 11th.—It was with some difficulty that I broke from this affectionate people, and went on through a most lovely country to Brecon. Thursday, 12th.—I found the little flock were in great peace, and increasing in number as well as in strength. I preached in the Town Hall. I never saw such a congregation in Brecon before! No, not even when I preached abroad. And I scarce ever found the power of God so present. It seemed as if every one must know the Lord, from the least to the greatest.

AUGUST, 1788, Saturday, 16th.—Brecon. Preached in the evening. Sunday, 17th, I preached in the Room at eight, on the fruit of the Spirit. In the evening I preached in the spacious Town Hall, so filled as it had

* Where are the hanging woods? Priory Groves?

never been before. I think there is a little company here that are truly alive to God.

Two years later, in August, 1790, the veteran Evangelist paid his last visit to Brecon. He preached in the Town Hall and Watton Chapel on the state of the Church at Ephesus, and our Lord's lamentation over Jerusalem.

On this occasion, John Hughes, of Ship Street, was introduced to him, and the following morning Mrs. Walter Williams, Bailie, brought her first-born to him that he might bless him.

Verging on his eighty-eighth birthday, the venerable man, regardless of toil and discomforts, traversed the country to preach the Gospel. All his early comrades had fallen! With matchless might the grand old warrior wielded the weapons of his warfare until he exchanged the sword for the sceptre.

> Servant of God, well done! Well has thou fought
> The better fight; who singly hast maintained,
> Against revolted multitudes, the cause
> Of God: in word, mightier than they in arms.

We may append here a few extracts from the Society Stewards' Book, relative to Wesley's visits to the town.

1781.	April.	For taking care of Mr Wesley's horse	1	0
		Letters and Turnpike for Mr. Wesley and man	1	3
1784.	Aug. 7.	For a letter, Rev. Mr Wesley	0	4
	,, 12.	To Mr. Wesley, towards his expenses to Carmarthen	10	6
		Turnpike for his carriage..	1	4
	,, ,,	A letter from Mr. Church about Mr. Wesley's journey through Wales	0	6
	,, ,,	For a Messenger for Mr. Wesley to the Hundred of Builth	3	6
1788.	Aug. 16.	Paid Richard, Mr. Wesley's driver, to pay for mending the collar. etc...	3	6
	Sep. 30.	Mr. Boldwin's expenses for Mr. Wesley, and Horse-hire himself £1	5	5

Methodist Relics in the Circuit.

Besides a few letters from Wesley, Coke, and Benson, there are some souvenirs of Wesley's visits to Brecon still remaining.

Miss Morgan, of Bowen Terrace, has in her possession a teapot which Mr. Wesley presented to Mrs. J, Church, of Ffrwdgrech.

Mr. William Williams, Lodge, Pendre, has a Communion Cup which the Evangelist presented to, and used at, the Watton Chapel, and Mrs. Anwyl, of Hay, possesses a pair of Sugar-tongs which were given by him to Mrs. Walter Churchey.

Three letters of much interest to Methodists are inserted. The first, which is in the possession of Mr. W. M. Brien, was written by John Wesley to Howel Harris. Wesley and Whitfield separated. Wesley's doctrine of free grace Whitfield could not

WHITFIELD.

endorse, and Whitfield's doctrine of Predestination was distasteful to Wesley. A controversy arose, and estrangement ensued, but through the timely interposition of Harris their friendship was resumed. Towards our warm-hearted and noble countryman Wesley cherished the most sincere affection, and on the 6th of August, 1742, wrote to him as follows :—

My Dear Brother,—I have just read yours dated at Trevecca, October 19th, 1741. And what is that we contend about? Allow such a perfection as you have there described, and all further dispute I account vain jangling and a mere strife of words. As to the other point, we agree: 1, that no man can have any power except it be given him from above; 2, that no man can merit anything but hell, seeing all our merit is in the blood of the Lamb. For those two fundamental points both you and I earnestly contend: what need, then, of this great gulf to be fixed between us? Brother, is thy heart

with mine, as my heart is with thine? If it be, give me thine hand. I am indeed a poor, foolish, sinful worm: and how long my Lord will use me I know not. I sometimes think the time is coming when he will lay me aside, For surely never before did He send such a labourer into such a harvest. But, so long as I continue in the work, let us rise up together against the evil-doers: let us not weaken, but strengthen one another's hands in God. My brother, my soul is gone forth to meet thee: let us fall upon one another's neck. The good Lord blot out all that is past, and let there henceforward be peace between me and thee.

I am, my dear brother, ever yours,
JOHN WESLEY.

London, August 6th, 1742.

On Friday week last my Mother went home, with the voice of praise and thanksgiving.

Letter II. From Joseph Benson to Walter Churchey, now in the possession of Mrs. Walker, Hay :—

London, August 8th, 1796.

My Dear Friend,—I snatch a moment from the hurry of business in Conference to thank you for your kind letter, and to say I have seen and conversed for a few minutes with your son, and am pleased to find, according to the testimony of my nephew, Wainwright, that he appears to be a very sensible and promising young man. As to Thomas Paine's infamous book, entitled "The Age of Reason," I am of opinion that the Bishop of Llandaff has answered it most completely, and that nothing further is requisite to be done.

You and I differ very materially in our judgment respecting Brothers. You think him a *Prophet*, and I think him a *Lunatic*. Time will show which of us is right, and till then we may agree to disagree.* I am sorry that I have only time at present to desire my respects to Mrs. Churchey, and to subscribe myself.

Your very affectionately,
JOSEPH BENSON.

In connection with the foregoing letter, it is worthy of note that Miss Churchey gave the Rev. Richard Roberts, a very valuable collection of letters, which Walter Churchey had received from John and Charles Wesley, Whitfield, Harris, Fletcher, Benson, Cowper, and others. Mr. Roberts subsequently presented the letters to the late Dr. Punshon (who possessed a large and rare collection of historic letters), thinking that ultimately the eminent Doctor would make a present of the collection to some Methodist Institute, College, or Mission-house, but Dr. Punshon died, and the letters have disappeared. If we had the pleasure of re-producing the correspondence, it would have thrown an interesting light on many subjects, and formed a welcome accession to this department of our sketch.

Letter III. From Dr. Coke to Mr. Thomas Williams, Attorney-at-law, Brecon. Now in the possession of Mrs. W. J. Roberts, High Street, Brecon :—

* This reference to Brothers shews how Walter Churchey was influenced by a Millenarian theory. Richard Brothers was the prophecy expounder of that period, and Churchey warmly espoused his teaching. Writing in 1800, Churchey says :—"I have lost my friend Wesley: but I shall see him again, perhaps *soon*, even upon *earth*, where the *sufferers* for Christ are to rise and reign in His spiritual kingdom on earth a thousand years. I grow daily a greater *Brotherite*."

Downpatrick, Ireland, April 5th, 1797.

My Dear Sir,—I have found it indispensably necessary to bring my long voyages across the Atlantic to a conclusion, and for that purpose to determine on which side of the Ocean to spend the remainder of my days. I have therefore, after most mature consideration, resolved in favour of the States of America.

It will therefore be necessary for me to settle my little affairs in Europe as soon as possible, as I am not sure but I may return to America from Ireland, in which case I shall sail, God willing, about the middle of next July. On this account I must beg of you to take up the Coity-Mortgage as soon as possible. I have left the writings in the hands of Mr. Collin, Attorney-at-law, Spital-Square, London, and shall write to him by this post to settle all matters in this business with you. Now I am going to take leave of Europe, I will inform you of my temporal circumstances. By the considerable sums which I have myself given from time to time in my zeal for the spreading of the Gospel in different parts of the world, I shall not have now more of my fortune remaining, after settling all my affairs, than the Coity-Mortgage, if you except my library, which may be worth two or three hundred pounds.

You see therefore the necessity I am under of taking that sum over with me, notwithstanding I am conscious of it that I shall have all my travelling expenses borne in America.

I might, according to the judgment of the world, have done better in more respects than one; but I have long consecrated all I am and have to God: and the many thousands of poor heathens I have been the instrument of bringing to Christ, infinitely more than compensate for all my losses and sufferings: nor has the Lord left my ministry without success among professors of Christianity in different parts of the world.

I must therefore beg, my dear cousin, that you will finally settle this business with Mr. Collins as soon as possible, in the month of June next at farthest. Will you be so kind as to write to him on the subject? And favour me with an answer in White Friars Street, Dublin. You will be so kind as to settle the interest up to the time of paying the principal.

I'll also beg the favour of you to send me a statement of my accounts with Howell, of the Shoulder of Mutton.* I intend to resign those premises into the hands of Sir Charles Morgan before I sail, and at the same time send a resignation of my place in the Common Council of Brecon, as my engagements to our American Connexion are irrevocable.

I beg my respects to Cousin Williams and all your family, and am, my dear Sir, your much obliged and affectionate kinsman and servant,

THOMAS COKE.

CHAPTER XXI.

EVENTS OF INTEREST IN THE CIRCUIT.

"Footprints on the Sands of Time."

A FEW events of local interest will be briefly recorded here. Landmarks in the progress of our Church in the neighbourhood.

Llanthew Feast.

Wesley visited Llanthew, a village two miles from Brecon, in 1744. The ancient church, close to the ruins of the castellated palace of the distinguished Giraldus Cambrensis, Archdeacon of

* Now Siddons' Vaults, Brecon, where Mrs. Siddons, England's greatest tragedienne was born in July, 1755.

Brecknock, was then in a neglected condition. The eminent Evangelist, who had traversed England and Wales, said:—"Such a church I had never seen before. There was not a glass window belonging to it; but only boards, with holes bored here and there, through which a dim light glimmered in." In 1872 extensive improvements were made, and the venerable temple was restored.

The antiquities of Llanthew, and the story of the famous Giraldus's learning, influence, and labours, or of the visit of Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury, to Llanthew, when prosecuting his Crusade Mission in Wales, in 1187-9, and how the oratory of the Archdeacon Giraldus prevailed more successfully than the high name and authority of the Archbishop, might unquestionably be woven into a fascinating tale, but the story of a less distinguished Crusade, deserves attention now.

At Llanthew a notorious feast was held annually on the Lord's Day, and scenes of drunkenness and dissipation occurred. Mr. Jabez Jenkinson, the first head-master of Dr. Coke Memorial Schools, organised a crusade to visit the scene of revelry. Earnest and enthusiastic workers rallied round the standard of the Cross. An immense open-air service was held in the centre of the village, the Feast collapsed, and has never been held since. Christian enthusiasm triumphed.

Evangelistic Services.

The year 1876 witnessed a powerful revival of the Work of God in Lion Street Chapel.* In 1882, Mr. Robinson Watson conducted a series of mission services, and in 1884, the Rev. Thomas Cook, Connexional Evangelist, visited the town. Memorable meetings were held, and living monuments of the missions still remain.

Conventions.

The first Christian Workers' Convention was held at Glasbury, in June, 1875. Much spiritual power rested on the deliberations of the workers, and a gracious impetus was given to aggressive religious life in the Circuit. An excellent paper on "Christian Work and Workers" was read by Mr D. J. Thomas, Brecon. Another Circuit Convention was held at Hay, in connection with the Quarterly Meeting, in December, 1884.

* This revival occurred during the superintendency of the Rev. L. Railton, to whom is due the credit of discovering that the Brecon Society could produce local preachers. For many years previously the Society was indebted to lay preachers who had been trained elsewhere; but since 1873 there has been a strong and increasing body of Breconians who fill that honoured office. Among other Circuit reforms, Mr Railton introduced the offertory system, which has worked well.

Temperance.

The Temperance cause in the neighbourhood has gathered some of its staunchest supporters and most valiant and energetic workers from among "The People called Methodists." The call to arms was given in a powerful sermon, preached in December, 1880, on Temperance Sunday, by the Rev. Edward D. Webb, of Abergavenny.

Holiness Convention.

Sunday, March 20th, 1887, was regarded as a Holiness Sunday throughout the Circuit. Scriptural holiness was the theme of every preacher. The following evening a convention was held in connection with the Local Preachers' Quarterly meeting at Lion Street, when this grand doctrine—the glory of Methodism—was discussed.

People's Services.

Hay led the van in this work. During the winter of 1886-7 special services were held every Sunday after the usual evening service. Sacred songs and solos were sung, and popular addresses delivered. The following winter the workers in Lion Street Chapel inaugurated a similar series, which was highly successful.

"The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient, . . . for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

CHAPTER XXII.

STATISTICS OF METHODISM.

"Figures can be made to prove anything" is a trite and true adage. Some will doubtless consider that the schedule of church membership in our circuit is a very inadequate return for the labours of one hundred and forty years. Apparently, that is so, but in reality the figures are misleading, inasmuch as they only take cognizance of those who think of Wesley as under God their religious father. The true results of the revival can never be tabulated. Methodism meant, as we have already seen, the

conversion of England. It effected a prodigious and complete revolution in the life of existing churches, and its reflex influences have been mighty beyond description. The world is inexpressibly richer for the marvellous achievements of the illustrious founders of the church. Every section of the Church of Christ owes its re-invigorated power to the great awakening of the eighteenth century. The striking eulogium of Professor Lecky (in Chap. 1) exaggerates not the glory of the Revival. John Wesley and George Whitfield's preaching won incomparably grander victories for England than the diplomacy and statesmanship of the elder Pitt, and were Methodism to perish to-day, and its name buried in oblivion before the sun sets, its blessed influences would go on for ages enriching the Church of God and regenerating the world.

Brecon Methodism is not numerically strong, but will anyone venture to assert that the membership of the circuit adequately represents the result of our church in the neighbourhood?

Let Brecon in 1735 be compared with Brecon in 1888, and what is the result? Where a hundred and fifty years ago, wickedness triumphed, religion asserts her supremacy. Where Conforming and Nonconforming Churches were weak and indifferent, they are vigorous and aggressive, and the Methodist sanctuaries of the county are the pledge that Howel Harris's dream of a holy church in a holy land will be realized.

Some one said, that Methodism is doing to-day what she has always done—sending workers to other churches. That is not by any means her least work, and the brightest star in her crown is her influence upon other churches.

It is said that during the sessions of the London Conference of 1872, Dr. Jobson invited five eminent representatives of other churches—Drs. Allon, Raleigh, Stoughton, Binney, and Fraser, to dinner. After dinner, Dr. Jobson proposed a Love-Feast, and they each gave their experience. Dr. Allon said: "I was converted in the Wesleyan Chapel at Beverley, and became secretary of the Sunday School there." Dr. Raleigh said: "I was converted in the Brunswick Wesleyan Chapel, Liverpool, under the ministry of the Rev. Theophilus Lessey." Dr. Stoughton said: "I was converted in St. Peter's Wesleyan Chapel, Norwich." Dr. Binney said: "I was not converted in a Wesleyan Chapel, but through a Wesleyan local preacher with whom I worked." And Dr. Fraser added: "I was not converted through Methodism, but through a Methodist lady I became a minister." Similar results have always characterized Methodism, and what is true of universal Methodism, is unquestionably, true of Brecon Methodism. Therefore, let no one attempt to minimise the position of our church in the neighbourhood.

It has accomplished great things in the past, yet its youth is perennial, its vigour unabated, its resources exhaustless, and its prospects "bright as the promises of God."

BRECON CIRCUIT STATISTICS.

Chapels.—Number of Chapels, 8. Estimated value— £4,875.
Day-School.—Two Departments. Estimated value— £1,000.
Minister's House.—Estimated value—£425.
Church Members, 256. Sunday Scholars, 460. Band of Hope, 412. Day School Scholars, 320.

We now pass to the General Statistics of Methodism.

GENERAL STATISTICS OF METHODISM.

Wesleyan Methodists:—	Ministers.	Members.
Great Britain	1988	496622
Ireland	240	25753
Foreign Missions	341	35416
French Conference	33	1668
South African Conference	180	32153
West Indian Conferences	89	50662
Australasian Conferences	600	79023
Methodist New Connexion	193	34756
Bible Christians	253	21258
Primitive Methodists	1038	191662
United Methodist Free Churches	426	84935
Wesleyan Reform Union	18	8351
Independent Methodists	—	6090
United States—The various Methodist Churches ..	27574	4304325
Canada—Methodist Church in Canada	1610	199479
British Methodist Episcopal Church (Col.)	45	2100
Totals	34628	5,574,253

Total of Ministers and Members, 5,608,881.

General view of Wesleyan Methodism at the Death of Mr Wesley.—312 Preachers, 115 Circuits, 16 Mission Stations, 79,000 Members.

"We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work Thou didst in their days. . . For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: by Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance, because Thou had'st a favour unto them."

The noble sentiments of Dr. Etheridge, the biographer of our illustrious townsman, Dr. Coke, will form a very beautiful and appropriate recapitulation of this Historical and Biographical sketch:—

"Methodism is apostolic Christianity, bearing the token of the world's immemorial scorn in a title of reproach. Hated by the depraved, and misunderstood only by the ignorant, it carries, in the view of all enlightened men, the true signature of this *prisca fides*, the faith at first delivered to the saints.

"Its incorrupt doctrine, transcendant and unquenchable zeal, and the world-broad designs and activities of mercy, lead the inquirer for its origin to no inferior source than the counsels of that eternal love which has redeemed mankind. Buried in the apostasy of the middle ages, the diminished fires of primæval Christianity had never been extinct: but, faithfully maintained at the hidden altars of the true spiritual Church, they broke into new radiance at the Reformation of the sixteenth century, and in the later Revival of the eighteenth, with a more potent and effectual grace.

"The Reformation ushered in by the ministry of Luther, was soon overclouded by sinister and worldly influences, which obscured its glory and weakened its spiritual force. Never thoroughly orthodox in doctrine, infected with a certain leaven of Antinomianism, and trammelled with the interference of secular politicians, its religious life declined into formality, and its faith, except in the dead letter of written and ignored confessions, dwindled into the poor delusions of Germanic Rationalism.

In contrast with this, the vital Reformation of the eighteenth century reveals a purity of doctrine, a biblical standard of morals, an expansive zeal, and a deathless life, which seal it with credentials from the throne of Christ, and offer the plain prophetic guarantee that its appointed task will be fulfilled in a consummation to be solemnized in the hymns of a regenerated world.

Let "the people called Methodists," who, in so many regions of the earth think of Wesley as under God their religious father, know that they may trace through him their Christian genealogy back to the apostolic times. When that servant of God received the knowledge of salvation through the remission of sins, in communion with the Moravian Church, he took his place in a long succession of witnesses of the pristine faith, who, back through the Moravians, the Bohemian Brethren, the Waldenses and their progenitors in the Mediterranean lands, held fast in the dungeons of oppression, the conflicts of war, and the flames of martyrdom, the good deposit which the Redeemer himself committed to His church.

The testimony of Jesus and His salvation then given by Wesley, like the trumpet on Sinai's Mount, waxes louder with the lapse of time. It speaks to-day in many languages, and calls the wide world to faith and hope; while the cloud, little at first as a man's hand, spreads broadly, and stoops, rebundant with blessings, over them who are nigh, and them who are afar off. These words are not written with a sectarian feeling.

The genius of Methodism is true catholicity; it could not otherwise be really Christian. It is not only the Wesleyan Church which owes a lasting obligation to the men raised up by God as his instruments in this great work; for every communion of the church has more or less partaken of its benefits. Its penetrating ethereal fire has found them all, and is working its heavenly effects in them, in giving vigour to the weak and life to the dead, in strengthening such as do stand, in comforting and helping the weak-hearted, in lifting them that had fallen, and inspiring them with high hope of the final victory over their common foe. On both sides of the ocean—in America, in France and Switzerland, Sweden and Germany—this breath of the Lord is changing the sombre cold of winter for the sunshine and hopes of the spring."

CHAPTER XXIII.

SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTER.—"WORKERS TOGETHER WITH HIM."

VALUABLE service have been rendered to Methodism in Brecon for nearly a hundred and forty years by earnest and God-fearing Lay-preachers, and by conscientious and faithful Stewards. The Circuit records contain the names of many men whose deeds are written in the Lamb's Book of Life, and were it possible, biographical sketches would be inserted here. John Watkins, of Glanusk, was Methodism's first local preacher and class leader in Brecon, John Church, of Ffrwdgrech, the first society steward, and Hugh Bold, the first chapel steward. Since their day God has raised up a succession of loyal and true men, and in this portion of the work the names of the successors of those good men will be inserted.

CIRCUIT OFFICIALS IN 1888.

Ministers.—Revs. T. Wynne Jones, Brecon, and James Hanby, Hay.
Lay Agent.—Mr. Henry O. Hobday, Llanfaes.
Local Preachers.—Messrs. J. Thomas, D. J. Thomas, J. R. Morgan, J. Jones, D. Wilkinson, A. Walters, all of Brecon. E. Phillips, W. Edman, W. F. King, of Hay.
Exhorters.—Messrs. T. Wootton, W. Powell, E. Beavan, J. Edwards.
Circuit Stewards.—Ald. Rich, J.P., Brecon; and Mr. James Williams, George House, Hay.
Secretary of the Quarterly Meeting.—Rev. J. Hanby.
Treasurer of Auxiliary Fund.—Mr. J. D. Fryer, Brecon.
Chapel Secretary.—Mr. J. Thomas. Education Secretary.—Rev. J. Hanby.
Missionary Treasurer.—Mr. J. Thomas. Secretary.—Rev. J. Hanby.

LION STREET CHAPEL.

Trustees.—Messrs. H. C. Rich, W. M. Brien, J. E. Nott, O. P. Larkin, James Thomas, D. J. Thomas, Thomas Wootton, John Jones, H. C. I. Rich, David Fisher, and Charles J. Price.
Chapel Stewards.—Messrs. James Thomas and George Nott.
Church Stewards.—Messrs. Larkin and Wootton.
Poor Stewards.—Messrs. Fisher and D. J. Thomas.
Class Leaders.—Minister, Messrs. Rich, J. Thomas, G. W. Jones, Mrs. Roberts, and Miss Nott.
Junior Society Classes.—Leaders, Misses Nott and Lloyd, and Mr. C. Scott.
Choir Leader, Mr. Fisher. Organist, Miss Florence Morgan.
Sunday School.—Superintendent, Mr. G. F. Nott. Deputy Superintendent, Mr. C. Scott. Secretary, Mr. S. Adams. Librarian, Mr. Oscar L. Watkins. Treasurer, Mr. D. J. Thomas.
Band of Hope.—President, Rev. T. Wynne-Jones. Conductor, Mr. G. Nott. Secretary, Mr. O. L. Watkins. Treasurer, Mr. Wootton.
Tract Society.—This Society celebrates its jubilee this year. Several distributors were appointed in 1838, two only of whom survive, Mrs W. J. Roberts and Mr. W. M. Brien. President, Rev. T. Wynne-Jones. Treasurer, Mrs. James Thomas. Secretary, Mr. G. Nott.
Foreign Missions.—Secretary, Mr. W. Martin.

Juvenile Association.—Secretary, Mr. W. J. Nott.
Ladies Sewing Meeting.—This excellent Society was established in 1884. It has rendered the Church very material assistance under the able management of Mrs. Phipps and Miss Morgan, Bowen Terrace, assisted by Mrs Wynne-Jones, Mrs. Rich, Mrs. Orlopp, and others. Treasurer, Mrs Roberts. Secretary, Miss Nott.

The sweet-toned Harmonium, which has been in use for several years in the Sunday School, was a "marriage gift" by Mr. and Mrs. D. J. Thomas.

LLANFAES CHAPEL.

Chapel Trustees.—Messrs. D. Recs, J. J. Roberts, and T. Williams, Brecon; T. Jones, T. Jenkins, W. Davies, and J. M. Jamcs, Defynnock; J. Davies, Pwllgloyw: D. Lloyd, Lock; and Aythan Powell, Velindre.
Stewards.—Messrs. Fisher and Rees.
Church Stewards.—Messrs. Jones and Probert Leaders, Miss Griffith, and Messrs. Hobday and Probert.
Sunday School.—Superintendent, Mr. Fisher. Secretary, Mr. Sidney Jones. Treasurer, Miss Williams, High street.
Band of Hope.—President, Rev. T. Wynne-Jones. Conductor, Mr. Probert. Secretary, Mr. Hobday.
Juvenile Association.—Secretary, Mr W. J. Nott. Organist, Mrs C. E. W. Price, North House, and others.

HAY.

Chapel.—Trustees, Messrs. J. Michael, Edward Phillips, J. P. Lloyd, W. Terrett, James Williams, Henry Parmee, David Price, Thomas Skinner, and H. C. Rich. Stewards, Messrs. W. Terrett and T. W. Evans.
Church.—Stewards, Messrs. Goodwin and King. Poor Stewards, Messrs. Gwynne and Lloyd. Leaders, Minister, Mrs Anwyl, Messrs. Parmee and Goodwin. Junior Society Leader, Rev. J. Hanby. Choir Leader, Mr E. Beavan. Organist, Mr W. F. King.
Sunday School.—Superintendent, Mr Terrett. Secretary, Mr King. Librarian, Mr Charles Terrett. Treasurer, Mr James Williams.
Band of Hope.—President, Rev. J. Hanby. Secretary, Mr C. Terrett. Treasurer, Mr King.
Savings Bank.—Instituted in 1885. Manager, Mrs James Williams.
Tract Society.—President, Rev. J. Hanby. Secretary, Mr T. W. Evans.

GLASBURY.

Chapel.—Trustees, see Chap. X. Steward, Mr Thomas Jones, Skynlas.
Church.—Steward, Mr G. Butcher. Leader, Mr Woolfe.
Sunday School.—Superintendent, Mr George Butcher. Secretary, Mr G. Ferris. Secretary, Mr C. Mitchell.
Savings Bank.—Instituted 1887. Treasurer, Mrs Butcher.
Organist, Mrs George Butcher, Hampton.

TALGARTH.

Chapel.—Trustees, see Chap. XI. Steward, Mr D. Price, Mount Pleasant.
Church.—Leaders and Stewards, Messrs. Price and T. Jones.

LOCK.

Chapel.—Trustees, Messrs. Rich, Larkin, Wootton, H. C. Rich, Walters, J. Thomas, D. J. Thomas, J. R. Morgan, W. Powell, all of Brecon; D. Lloyd and J. Walker, of Lock. Stewards, Messrs. Morgan and Powell.
Church.—Stewards and Leaders, Messrs. Lloyd and Walker.
Sunday School.

DEVYNNOCK.

Chapel.—Trustees, Messrs. J. Jones, Thomas Davies, W. Davies, Thomas Jenkins, Thomas Jones, and James M. James. Steward, Mr Thomas Davies, Abercar.
Church.—Leader, Mr T. Jenkins.
Sunday School.

PWLLGLOEW.

Trustees, Messrs. John Williams, Thomas Williams, Thomas Davies, John Davies, William Davies, D. Williams, and D. Davies.

DR. COKE MEMORIAL SCHOOLS.

Trustees.—Messrs J. Jones, H. C. I. Rich, W. M. Brien, J. E. Nott, James Thomas, D. J. Thomas, H. C. Rich, junr., Thomas Wootton, D. Fisher, and Charles J. Price.
Managers.—Rev. T. Wynne Jones (chairman), Rev. James Hanby, Messrs. H. C. Rich, W. M. Brien, James Thomas, J. E. Nott, D. J. Thomas, T. Wootton, George W. Jones, W. J. Nott, D. Mynard.
Treasurer—Mr O. P. Larkin.
Secretary—Mr H. C. Rich, junr.

MINISTER'S HOUSE.

The manse in the Watton was purchased in 1871 from Mr. Edwin A. Wright. Prior to that year the Ministers resided in Lion Street, Watton, and on the Bulwark.

Trustees.—Messrs. H. C. Rich, W. M. Brien, O. P. Larkin, J. Thomas, D. J. Thomas, and David Price, Talgarth.
House Steward—Mr. James Thomas.

HARGEST LEGACY.

Trustees.—Messrs. H. C. Rich, W. J. Roberts, O. P. Larkin, and J. E. Nott.

This Legacy was invested in the Bank of England, 3 per cent. consols, in the names of Jonathan Thomas, Williams Jones, Roger Pugh, and James Williams. The new trustees were appointed in 1877, and "to avoid trouble, inconvenience, and expense, it is most desirable, whenever the trustees are reduced in number to two, that two others should be added to the two survivors, and thus prevent the trust from lapsing."

EBENEZER. JEHOVAH-JIREH.

"The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers! let Him not leave us, nor forsake us."

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